Encounter

September 1975 50p

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an open letter

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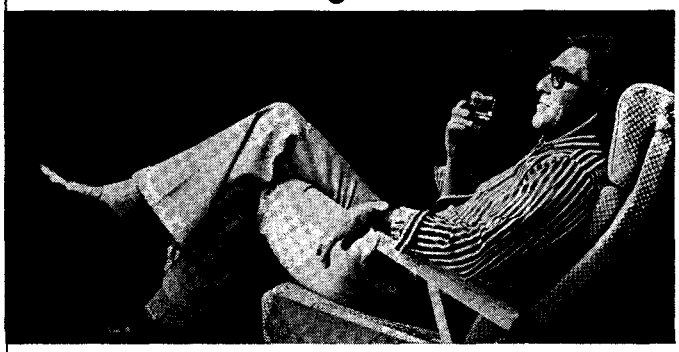

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ROUTLEDGE

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William Trevor

Angels at the Ritz

THE GAME WAS PLAYED when the party, whichever party it happened to be, had thinned out. Those who stayed on beyond a certain point—beyond, usually, about one o'clock—knew that the game was on the cards and in fact had stayed for that reason. Often, as one o'clock approached, there were marital disagreements about whether or not to go home.

The game of swapping wives and husbands, with chance rather than choice dictating the formations, had been practised in this outer suburb since the mid-1950s. The swinging wives and husbands of that time were now passing into the first years of elderliness, but their party game continued. In the outer suburb it was most popular when the early struggles of marriage were over, after children had been born and were established at school, when there were signs of marital wilting that gin and tonic did not cure.

"I think it's awfully silly," Polly Dillard pronounced, addressing her husband on the evening of the Ryders' party.

Her husband, whose first name was Gavin, pointed out that they'd known for years that the practice was prevalent at Saturday night parties in the outer suburb. There'd been, he reminded her, a moment at the Meacocks' when they'd realised they'd stayed too late, when the remaining men threw their car-keys on to the Meacocks' carpet and Sylvia Meacock began to tie scarves over the eyes of the wives.

"I mean, it's silly Sue and Malcolm going in for it. All of a sudden, out of the blue like that."

"They're just shuffling along with it, I suppose."

Polly shook her head. Quietly, she said that in the past Sue and Malcolm Ryder hadn't been the kind to shuffle along with things. Sue had sounded like a silly schoolgirl, embarrassed and not looking her in the eye when she told her.

Gavin could see she was upset, but one of the things about Polly since she'd had their two children and had come to live in the outer suburb was that she was able to deal with being upset. She dealt with it now, keeping calm, not raising her voice. She'd have been the same when Sue Ryder averted her eyes and said that she and Malcolm had decided to go in, too, for the outer suburb's most popular party game. Polly would have been astonished and would have said so, and then she'd have attempted to become reconciled to the development. Before this evening came to an end she really would be reconciled, philosophically accepting the development as part of the Ryders' middle age while denying that it could ever be part of hers.

"I suppose," Gavin said, "it's like a schoolgirl deciding to let herself be kissed for the first time. Don't you remember sounding silly then, Polly?"

She said it wasn't at all like that. Imagine, she suggested, finding yourself teamed up with a sweaty creature like Tim Gruffydd. Imagine any schoolgirl in her senses letting Tim Gruffydd within two million miles of her. She still couldn't believe that Sue and Malcolm Ryder were really going in for stuff like that. What on earth happened to people? she asked Gavin, and Gavin said he didn't know.

Polly Dillard was thirty-six, her husband two years older. Her short fair hair had streaks of grey in it now. Her thin, rather long face wasn't pretty but did occasionally seem beautiful, the eyes deep blue, the mouth wide,

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becoming slanted when she smiled. She herself considered that nothing matched properly in her face and that her body was too lanky, and her breasts too slight. But after thirty-six years she'd become used to all that, and other women envied her her figure and her looks.

On the evening of the Ryders' party she surveyed the features that did not in her opinion match, applying eye-shadow in her bedroom looking-glass and now and again glancing at the reflection of her husband, who was changing from his Saturday clothes into clothes more suitable for Saturday night at the Ryders': a blue corduroy suit, pink shirt and pinkish tie. Of medium height, fattening on lunches and alcohol, he was dark-haired and still handsome, for his chunky features were only just beginning to trail signs of this telltale plumpness. By profession Gavin Dillard was a director of promotional films for television, mainly in the soap and detergent field.

The hall-door bell rang as Polly rose from the chair in front of her looking-glass.

"I'll go," he said, adding that it would be Estrella, their babysitter.

"Estrella couldn't come, I had to ring Problem. Some Irish-sounding girl it'll be."

"Hannah McCarthy," a round-faced girl at the door said. "Are you Mr Dillard, sir?"

He smiled at her and said he was. He closed the door and took her coat. He led her through a white, spacious hall into a sitting-room that was spacious also, with pale blue walls and curtains. One child was already in bed, he told her, the other was still in his bath. Two boys, he explained: Paul and David. His wife would introduce her to them.

"Would you like a drink, Hannah?"

"Well, I wouldn't say no to that, Mr Dillard." She smiled an extensive smile at him. "A little sherry if you have it, sir."

"And how's the old country, Hannah?" He spoke lightly, trying to be friendly, handing her a glass of sherry. He turned away and poured himself some gin and tonic, adding a sliver of lemon. "Cheers, Hannah!"

"Cheers, sir! Ireland, d'you mean, sir? Oh, Ireland doesn't change."

"You go back, do you?"

"Every holidays. I'm in teacher training, Mr Dillard."

"I was at the Cork Film Festival once. A right old time we had."

"I don't know Cork, actually. I'm from Listowel myself. Are you in films yourself, sir? You're not an actor, Mr Dillard?"

"Actually I'm a director."

POLLY ENTERED the room. She said she was Mrs Dillard. She smiled, endeavouring to be as friendly as Gavin had been in case the girl didn't feel at home. She thanked her for coming at such short notice and presumably so far. She was wearing a skirt that Gavin had helped her to buy in Fenwick's only last week, and a white lace blouse she'd had for years, and her jade beads. The skirt, made of velvet, was the same green as the jade. She took the babysitter away to introduce her to the two children.

Gavin stood with his back to the fire, sipping at his gin and tonic. He didn't find it puzzling that Polly should feel so strongly about the fact that Sue and Malcolm Ryder had reached a certain stage in their marriage. The Ryders were their oldest and closest friends. Polly and Sue had known one another since they'd gone together to the Misses Summers' nursery school in Putney. Perhaps it was this depth in the relationship that caused Polly to feel so disturbed by a new development in her friend's life. In his own view, being offered a free hand with an unselected woman in return for agreeing that some man should maul his wife about wasn't an attractive proposition. It surprised him that the Ryders had decided to go in for this particular party game, and it surprised him even more that Malcolm Ryder had never mentioned it to him. But it didn't upset him.

"All right?" Polly enquired from the doorway, with her coat on. The coat was brown and fur-trimmed and expensive: she looked beautiful in it, Gavin thought, calm and collected. Once, a long time ago, she had thrown a milk-jug across a room at him. At one time she had wept a lot, deploring her lankiness and her flat breasts. All that seemed strangely out of character now.

He finished his drink and put the glass down on the mantelpiece. He put the sherry bottle beside the babysitter's glass in case she should feel like some more, and then changed his mind and returned the bottle to

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the cabinet, remembering that they didn't know the girl: a drunk babysitter, an experience they'd once endured, was a great deal worse than no babysitter at all.

"She seems very nice," Polly said in the car. "She said she'd read to them for an hour."

"An hour? The poor girl."

"She loves children."

It was dark, half-past eight on a night in November. It was raining just enough to make it necessary to use the windscreen wipers. Automatically, Gavin turned the car radio on: there was something pleasantly cosy about the glow of a car radio at night when it was raining, with the background whirr of the windscreen wipers and the wave of warmth from the heater.

"Let's not stay long," he said.

It pleased her that he said that. She wondered if they were dull not to wish to stay, but he said that was nonsense.

He drove through the sprawl of their outer suburb, all of it new, disguised now by the night. Orange street lighting made the façades of the carefully-designed houses seem different, changing the colours. But the feeling of space remained, and the uncluttered effect of the unfenced front gardens. Roomy Volvo estate-cars went nicely with the detached houses. So did Vauxhall Victors, and big bus-like Volkswagens. Families were packed into such vehicles on summer Saturday mornings, for journeys to cottages in the Welsh hills or in Hampshire or Herts. The Dillards' cottage was in the New Forest.

Gavin parked the car in Sandiway Crescent, several doors away from the Ryders' house because other cars were already parked closer to it. He'd have much preferred to be going out to dinner at Tonino's with Malcolm and Sue, lasagne and peperonata and a carafe of Chianti Christina, a lazy kind of evening that would remind all of them of other lazy evenings. Ten years ago they'd all four gone regularly to Tonino's trattoria in Greek Street, and the branch that had opened in their outer suburb was very like the original, even down to the framed colour photographs of A.C. Milan.

"Come on *in*!" Sue cried jollily at Number Four Sandiway Crescent. Her face was flushed with party excitement, her large brown eyes flashed adventurously with party spirit. Her eyes were the only outsize thing about her: she was tiny and black-haired, as pretty as a rose-bud.

"Gin?" Malcolm shouted at them from the depths of the crowded hall. "Sherry, Polly? Burgundy?"

Gavin kissed the dimpled cheek that Sue Ryder pressed up at him. She was in red, a long red dress that suited her, with a red band in her hair and red shoes.

"Yes, wine please, Malcolm," Polly said, and when she was close enough she slid her face towards his for the same kind of embrace as her husband had given his wife.

"You're looking edible, my love," he said, a compliment he'd been paying her for seventeen years.

He was an enormous man, made to seem more so by the smallness of his wife. His features had a mushy look. His head, like a pink sponge, was perched jauntily on shoulders that had once been a force to reckon with in rugby scrums. Although he was exactly the same age as Gavin, his hair had balded away to almost nothing, a rim of fluff not quite encircling the sponge.

"You're looking very smart yourself," Polly said, a statement that might or might not have been true: she couldn't see him properly because he was so big and she was so close to him, and she hadn't looked when she'd been further away. He was wearing a grey suit of some kind and a blue-striped shirt and the tie of the Harlequins' Rugby Club. Usually he looked smart, he probably did now.

"I'm feeling great," he said. "Nice little party we're having, Poll."

IT WASN'T REALLY little. Sixty or so people were in the Ryders' house, which was similar to the Dillards' house, well-designed and spacious. Most of the downstairs rooms, and the hall, had coffee-coloured walls, an experiment of Sue's which she believed had been successful. For the party, the bulkier furniture had been taken out of the coffee-coloured sitting-room, and all the rugs had been lifted from the parquet floor. Music came from a tape-recorder, but no one was dancing yet. People stood in small groups, smoking and talking and drinking. No one, so far, appeared to be drunk.

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All the usual people were there: the Stubbses, the Burgesses, the Pedlars, the Thompsons, the Stevensons, Sylvia and Jack Meacock, Philip and June Mulally, Oliver and Olive Gramsmith, Tim and Mary-Ann Gruffydd and dozens of others. Not all of them lived in the outer suburb; and some were older, some younger, than the Ryders and the Dillards. But there was otherwise a similarity about the people at the party: they were men who had succeeded or were in the process of succeeding, and women who had kept pace with their husbands' advance. No one looked poor at the Ryders' party.

At ten o'clock there was food, smoked salmon rolled up and speared with cocktail sticks, chicken *vol-au-vent* or beef Stroganoff with rice, salads of different kinds, Stilton and Brie and Port Salut, and meringues. Wine flowed generously, white burgundy, and red. Uncorked bottles were distributed on all convenient surfaces.

THE DANCING began when the first guests had eaten. To *Love of the Loved*, Polly danced with a man whose name she didn't know, who told her he was an estate agent, with an office in Jermyn Street. He held her rather close for a man whose name she didn't know. He was older than Polly, about fifty she reckoned, and smaller. He had a foxy moustache and foxy hair, and a round stomach, like a ball, which kept making itself felt. So did his knees.

In the room where the food was Gavin sat on the floor with Sylvia and Jack Meacock, and a woman in an orange trouser suit, with orange lips.

"Ralphie wouldn't come," this woman said, balancing food in the hollow of a fork. "He got cross with me last night."

Gavin ate from his fingers a *vol-au-vent* full of chicken and mushrooms that had gone a little cold. Jack Meacock said nothing would hold him back from a party given by the Ryders. Or any party, he added, guffawing, given by anyone. Provided there was refreshment, his wife stipulated. Well naturally, Jack Meacock said.

"He wouldn't come," the orange woman explained, "because he thought I misbehaved in Olive Gramsmith's kitchen. A fortnight ago, for God's sake!"

Gavin calculated he'd had four glasses of gin and tonic. He corrected himself, remembering the one he'd had with the baby-sitter. He drank some wine. He wasn't entirely drunk, he said to himself, he hadn't turned a certain corner, but the corner was the next thing there was.

"If you want to kiss someone you kiss him," the orange woman said. "I mean, for God's sake, he'd no damn right to walk into Olive Gramsmith's kitchen. I didn't see you," she said, looking closely at Gavin. "You weren't there, were you?"

"We couldn't go."

"You were there," she said to the Meacocks. "All over the place."

"We certainly were!" Jack Meacock guffawed through his beef Stroganoff, scattering rice on to the coffee-coloured carpet.

"Hullo," their hostess said, and sat down on the carpet beside Gavin, with a plate of cheese.

"You mean you've been married twelve years?" the estate agent said to Polly. "You don't look it."

"I'm thirty-six."

"What's your better half in? He's here, is he?"

"He directs films. Advertisements for TV. Yes, he's here."

"That's mine." He indicated with his head a woman who wasn't dancing, in lime green. She was going through a bad patch, he said: depressions.

They danced to *Sunporch Cha-Cha-Cha*, Simon and Garfunkel.

"Feeling O.K.?" the estate agent enquired, and Polly said yes, not understanding what he meant. He propelled her towards the mantelpiece and took from it the glass of white burgundy Polly had left there. He offered it to her and when she'd taken a mouthful he drank some from it himself. They danced again. He clutched her more tightly with his arms and flattened a cheek against one of hers, rasping her with his moustache. With dead eyes, the woman in lime green watched.

At other outer-suburb parties Polly had been through it all before. She escaped from the estate agent and was caught by Tim Gruffydd, who had already begun to sweat. After that another man whose name she didn't know danced with her, and then Malcolm Ryder did.

"You're edible tonight," he whispered, the

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warm mush of his lips damping her ear. "You're really edible, my love."

"Share my cheese," Sue offered in the other room, pressing Brie on Gavin.

"I need more wine," the woman in orange said, and Jack Meacock pushed himself up from the carpet. They all needed more wine, he pointed out, guffawing. The orange woman predicted that the next day she'd have a hangover and Sylvia Meacock, a masculine-looking woman, said she'd never had a hangover in forty-eight years of steady drinking.

"You going to stay a while?" Sue said to Gavin. "You and Polly going to stay?" She laughed, taking one of his hands because it was near to her. Since they'd known one another for such a long time it was quite in order for her to do that.

"Our babysitter's unknown," Gavin explained, "From the bogs of Ireland."

The orange woman said the Irish were bloody.

"Jack's Irish, actually," Sylvia Meacock said.

She went on talking about that, about her husband's childhood in Co. Down, about an uncle of his who used to drink a bottle and a half of whisky a day—on top of four glasses of stout, with porridge and bread, for his breakfast. If you drank at all you should drink steadily, she said.

GAVIN FELT UNEASY because all the time Sylvia Meacock was talking about the drinking habits of her husband's uncle in Co. Down Sue clung on to his hand. She held it lightly, moving her fingers in a caress that seemed to stray outside the realm of their long friendship. He was in love with Polly: he thought that deliberately, arraying the sentiment in his mind as a statement, seeing it suspended there. There was no one he'd ever known whom he'd been fonder of than Polly, or whom he respected more, or whom it would upset him more to hurt. Seventeen years ago he'd met her in the kitchens of the Hotel Belvedere, Penzance, where they had both gone to work for the summer. Five years later, having lived with one another in a flat in the cheaper part of Maida Vale, they'd got married because Polly wanted to have children. They'd moved to the outer suburb because the children needed space and fresh air, and because the Ryders, who'd lived on the floor above theirs in Maida Vale, had moved there a year before.

"She'll be all right," Sue said, returning to the subject of the Irish babysitter. "She could probably stay the night. She'd probably be delighted."

"Oh, I don't think so, Sue."

He imagined without difficulty the hands of men at the party unbuttoning Polly's lace blouse, the hands of Jack Meacock or the sweaty hands of Tim Gruffydd. He imagined Polly's clothes falling on to a bedroom carpet and then her thin, lanky nakedness, her small breasts and the faint mark of her appendix scar. "Oh, I say!" she said in a way that wasn't like her when the man, whoever he was, took off his own clothes. Without difficulty either, Gavin imagined being in a room himself for the same purpose, with the orange woman or Sylvia Meacock. He'd walk out again if he found himself in a room with Sylvia Meacock and he'd rather be in a room with Sue than with the orange woman. Because he wasn't quite sober, he had a flash of panic when he thought of what might be revealed when the orange trouser-suit fell to the floor: for a brief, disturbing moment he felt it was actually happening, that in the bonhomie of drunkenness he'd somehow agreed to the situation.

"Why don't we dance?" Sue suggested, and Gavin agreed.

"I think I'd like a drink," Polly said to Philip Mulally, an executive with Wolsey Menswear. He was a grey shadow of a man, not at all the kind to permit himself or his wife to be a party to sexual games. He nodded seriously when Polly interrupted their dance to say she'd like a drink. It was time in any case, he revealed, that he and June were making a move homewards.

"I love you in that lace thing," Malcolm Ryder whispered boringly as soon as Polly stopped dancing with Philip Mulally. He was standing waiting for her.

"I was saying to Philip I'd like a drink."

"Of course you must have a drink. Come and quaff a brandy with me, Poll." He took her by the hand and led her away from the dancers. The brandy was in his den, he said.

She shook her head, following him because she had no option. Above the noise of Cilla

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Black singing *Anyone Who Had a Heart* she shouted at him that she'd prefer some more white burgundy, that she was actually feeling thirsty. But he didn't hear her, or didn't wish to. "Ain't misbehaving", the foxy estate agent mouthed at her as they passed him, standing on his own in the hall. It was an expression that was often used, without much significance attaching to it, at parties in the outer suburb.

"Evening, all," Malcolm said in the room he called his den, closing the door behind Polly. The only light in the room was from a desk-lamp. In the shadows, stretched on a mock-leather sofa, a man and a woman were kissing one another. They parted in some embarrassment at their host's jocular greeting, revealing themselves, predictably, as a husband and another husband's wife.

"Carry on, folks," Malcolm said.

He poured Polly some brandy even though she had again said that what she wanted was a glass of burgundy. The couple on the sofa got up and went away, giggling. The man told Malcolm he was an old bastard.

"Here you are," Malcolm said, and then to Polly's distaste he placed his mushy lips on hers and exerted some pressure. The brandy glass was in her right hand, between them: had it not been there, she knew the embrace would have been more intimate. As it was, it was possible for both of them to pretend that what had occurred was purely an expression of Malcolm Ryder's friendship for her, a special little detour to show that for all these years it hadn't been just a case of two wives being friends and the husbands tagging along. Once, in 1965, they'd all gone to the Italian Adriatic together and quite often Malcolm had given her a kiss and a hug while telling her how edible she was. But somehow—perhaps because his lips hadn't been so mushy in the past—it was different now.

"Cheers!" he said, smiling at her in the dimness. For an unpleasant moment she thought he might lock the door. What on earth did you do if an old friend tried to rape you on a sofa in his den?

WITH EVERY STEP they made together, the orange woman increased her entwinement of Oliver Gramsmith. The estate agent was dancing with June Mulally, both of them ignoring the gestures of June Mulally's husband, Philip, who was still anxious to move homewards. The Thompsons, the Pedlars, the Stevensons, the Suttons, the Heeresmas and the Fultons were all maritally separated. Tim Gruffydd was clammily tightening his grasp of Olive Gramsmith, Sylvia Meacock's head lolled on the shoulder of a man called Thistlewine.

"Remember the Ritz?" Sue said.

He did remember. It was a long time ago, years before they'd all gone together to the Italian Adriatic, when they'd just begun to live in Maida Vale, one flat above the other, none of them married. They'd gone to the Ritz because they couldn't afford it. The excuse had been Polly's birthday.

"March the twenty-fifth," he said. "1961". He could feel her breasts, like spikes because of the neat control of her brassiere. He'd become too flabby, he thought, since March 25th, 1961.

"What fun it was!" With her dark petite head on one side, she smiled up at him. "Remember it all, Gavin?"

"Yes, I remember."

"I wanted to sing that song and no one would let me. Polly was horrified."

"Well, it was Polly's birthday."

"And of course we couldn't have spoiled that." She was still smiling up at him, her eyes twinkling, the tone of her voice as light as a feather. Yet the words sounded like a criticism, as though she were saying now—fourteen years later—that Polly had been a spoilsport, which at the time hadn't seemed so in the least. Her arms tightened around his waist. Her face disappeared as she sank her head against his chest. All he could see was the red band in her hair and the hair itself. She smelt of some pleasant scent. He liked the sharpness of her breasts. He wanted to stroke her head.

"Sue fancies old Gavin, you know," Malcolm said in his den.

Polly laughed. He had put a hand on her thigh and the fingers were now slightly massaging the green velvet of her skirt and the flesh beneath it. To have asked him to take his hand away or to have pushed it away herself would have been too positive, too much a reflection of his serious mood rather than her own determinedly casual one. A thickness had crept into his voice. He looked

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much older than thirty-eight; he'd worn less well than Gavin.

"Let's go back to the party, Malcolm." She stood up, dislodging his hand as though by accident.

"Let's have another drink."

He was a solicitor now, with Parker, Hille and Harper. He had been, in fact, a solicitor when they'd all lived in the cheaper part of Maida Vale. He'd still played rugby for the Harlequins then. She and Gavin and Sue used to watch him on Saturday afternoons, playing against the London clubs, Rosslyn Park and Blackheath, Waterloo, London Welsh, London Irish, and all the others. Malcolm had been a towering wing-three-quarter, with a turn of speed that was surprising in so large a man: people repeatedly said, even newspaper commentators, that he should play for England.

Polly was aware that it was a cliché to compare Malcolm as he had been with the blubbery, rather tedious Malcolm beside whom it was unwise to sit on a sofa. Naturally he wasn't the same. It was probably a tedious life being a solicitor with Parker, Hille and Harper day after day. He probably did his best to combat the blubberiness, and no man could help being bald. When he was completely sober, and wasn't at a party, he could still be quite funny and nice, hardly tedious at all.

"I've always fancied you, Poll," he said. "You know that."

"Oh, nonsense, Malcolm!"

SHE TOOK the brandy glass from him, holding it between them in case he should make another lurch. He began to talk about sex. He asked her if she'd read, a few years ago, about a couple on an aeroplane, total strangers, who had performed the sexual act in full view of the other passengers. He told her a story about Mick Jagger on an aeroplane, at the time when Mick Jagger was making journeys with Marianne Faithfull. He said the springing system of Green Line buses had the same kind of effect on him. Sylvia Meacock was lesbian, he said. Olive Gramsmith was a slapparat. Philip Mulally had once been seen hanging about Shepherd Market, looking at the tarts. He hadn't been faithful to Sue, he said, but Sue knew about it and now they were going to approach all that side of things in a different way. Polly knew about it, too, because Sue had told her: a woman in Parker, Hille and Harper had wanted Malcolm to divorce Sue, and there'd been, as well, less serious relationships between Malcolm and other women.

"*Since you went away the days grow long,*" sang Nat King Cole in the coffee-coloured sitting-room, "*and soon I'll hear ole winter's song.*" Some guests, in conversation, raised their voices above the voice of Nat King Cole. Others swayed to his rhythm. In the sitting-room and the hall and the room where the food had been laid out there was a fog of cigarette smoke and the warm smell of burgundy. Men sat together on the stairs, talking about the election of Margaret Thatcher as leader of the Conservative party. Women had gathered in the kitchen and seemed quite happy there, with glasses of burgundy in their hands. In a bedroom the couple who had been surprised in Malcolm's den continued their embrace.

"So very good we were," Sue said on the parquet dance-floor. She broke away from Gavin, seizing him by the hand as she did so. She led him across the room to a teak-faced cabinet that contained gramophone records. On top of it there was a gramophone and the tape-recorder that was relaying the music.

"Don't dare move," she warned Gavin, releasing his hand in order to poke among the records. She found what she wanted and placed it on the turn-table of the gramophone. The music began just before she turned the tape-recorder off. A cracked female voice sang:

"*That certain night, the night we met, there was music abroad in the air. . . .*"

"Listen to it," Sue said, taking Gavin's hand again and drawing him on to the dancing area.

"*There were angels dining at the Ritz, and a nightingale sang in Berkeley Square.*"

The other dancers, who'd been taken aback by the abrupt change of tempo, slipped into the new rhythm. The two spikey breasts again depressed Gavin's stomach.

"Angels of a kind we were," Sue said. "D'you think we've fallen, Gavin?"

Once in New York and once in Liverpool he'd made love since his marriage, to other girls. Chance encounters they'd been, ir-

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relevant and unimportant at the time and more so now. He had suffered from guilt immediately afterwards, but the guilt had faded, with both girls' names. He could remember their names if he tried; he once had, when suffering from a bout of indigestion in the night. He had remembered precisely their faces and their naked bodies and what each encounter had been like, but memories that required such effort hadn't seemed quite real. It would, of course, be different with Sue.

"Fancy Sue playing that," her husband said, pausing outside the den with Polly. "They've been talking about the Ritz, Poll."

"Goodness!" With a vividness that was a welcome antidote to Malcolm's disclosures about the sex life of his guests, the occasion at the Ritz returned to her. Malcolm said: "It was my idea, you know. Old Gavin and I were boozing in The Hoop and he suddenly said, 'It's Polly's birthday next week,' and I said, 'For God's sake! Let's all go down to the Ritz.' "

"You had oysters, I remember." She smiled at him, feeling better because they were no longer in the den, and stronger because of the brandy. Malcolm would have realised by now how she felt, he wouldn't pursue the matter.

"We weren't much more than kids," he said. He seized her hand in a way that might have been purely a sentimental way, as though inspired by the memory.

"My twenty-second birthday. What an extraordinary thing it was to do!"

In fact, it had been more than that. Sitting in the restaurant with people she liked, she'd thought it was the nicest thing that had ever happened to her on her birthday. It was absurd because none of them could afford it. It was absurd to go to the Ritz for a birthday treat, Martinis in the Rivoli Bar because Malcolm said it was the thing, the gilt chairs and the ferns. But the absurdity hadn't mattered because in those days nothing much did. It was fun, they enjoyed being together, they had a lot to be happy about. Malcolm might yet play rugby for England. Gavin was about to make his breakthrough into films. Sue was pretty, and Polly that night felt beautiful. They had sat there carelessly laughing, while deferential waiters simulated the gaiety of their mood. They had drunk champagne because Malcolm said they must.

With Malcolm still holding her hand, she crossed the spacious hall of Number Four Sandiway Crescent. People were beginning to leave. Malcolm released his hold of her in order to bid them good-bye.

She stood in the doorway of the sitting-room watching Gavin and Sue dancing. She lifted her brandy glass to her lips and drank from it calmly. Her oldest friend was attempting to seduce her husband, and for the first time in her life she disliked her. Had they still been at the Misses Summers' nursery school she would have run at her and hit her with her fists. Had they still been in Maida Vale or on holiday on the Italian Adriatic she would have shouted and made a fuss. Had they been laughing in the Ritz she'd have got up and walked out.

They saw her standing there, both of them almost in the same moment. Sue smiled at her and called across the coffee-coloured sitting-room, as though nothing untoward were happening.

"D'you think we've fallen, Polly?" Her voice was full of laughter, just like it had been that night. Her eyes still had their party gleam, which probably had been there too.

"Let's dance, Poll," Malcolm said, putting his arms around her waist from behind.

IT MADE IT WORSE when he did that because she knew by the way he touched her that she was wrong: he didn't realise. He probably thought she'd enjoyed hearing all that stuff about Philip Mullally hanging about after prostitutes and Olive Gramsmith being a slapparat, whatever a slapparat was.

She finished the brandy in her glass and moved with him on to the parquet. What had happened was that the Ryders had had a conversation about all this. They'd said to one another that this was how they wished—since it was the first time—to make a sexual swap. Polly and Gavin were to be of assistance to their friends because a woman in Parker, Hille and Harper had wanted Malcolm to get a divorce and because there'd been other relationships. Malcolm and Sue were approaching all that side of things in a different way now, following the fashion in the outer suburb since the fashion worked wonders with wilting marriages.

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"Estrella babysitting, is she?" Malcolm asked. "All right if you're late, is she? You're not going to buzz off, Poll?"

"Estrella couldn't come. We had to get a girl from Problem."

He suggested, as though the arrangement were a natural one and had been practised before, that he should drive her home when she wanted to go. He'd drive the babysitter from Problem home also. "Old Gavin won't want to go," he pronounced, trying to make it all sound like part of his duties as host. To Polly it sounded preposterous, but she didn't say so. She just smiled as she danced with him.

They'd made these plans quite soberly presumably, over breakfast or when there was nothing to watch on television, or in bed at night. They'd discussed the game that people played with car-keys or playing cards, or by drawing lots in other ways. They'd agreed that neither of them cared for the idea of taking a chance. "Different," Malcolm had probably quite casually said, "if we got the Dillards." Sue wouldn't have said anything then. She might have laughed, or got up to make tea if they were watching the television, or turned over and gone to sleep. On some other occasion she might have drifted the conversation towards the subject again and Malcolm would know that she was interested. They would then have worked out a way of interesting their oldest friends. Dancing with Malcolm, Polly watched while Gavin's mouth descended to touch the top of Sue's head. He and Sue were hardly moving on the dance-floor.

"Well, that's fixed up then," Malcolm said. He didn't want to dance any more. He wanted to know that it was fixed up, that he could return to his party for an hour or so, with something to look forward to. He would drive her home and Gavin would remain. At half-past one or two, when the men threw their car-keys on to the carpet and the blindfolded women each picked one out, he and Sue would simply watch, not taking part. And when everyone went away he and Sue would be alone with all the mess and the empty glasses. And she would be alone with Malcolm.

Polly smiled at him again, hoping he'd take the smile to mean that everything was fixed because she didn't want to go on dancing with him. If one of them had said, that night in the Ritz, that for a couple of hours after dinner they should change partners there'd have been a most unpleasant silence.

Malcolm patted her possessively on the hip. He squeezed her forearm and went away, murmuring that people might be short of drink. A man whom she didn't know, excessively drunk, took her over, informing her that he loved her. As she swayed around the room with him, she wanted to say to Sue and Malcolm and Gavin that yes, they had fallen. Of course Malcolm hadn't done his best to combat his blubberiness, of course he didn't make efforts. Malcolm was awful, and Sue was treacherous. When people asked Gavin if he made films why didn't he ever reply that the films he made were television commercials? She must have fallen herself for it was clearly in the nature of things, but she couldn't see how.

"IT'S TIME WE went home, Sue," Gavin said.

"Of course it isn't, Gavin."

"Polly—"

"You're nice, Gavin."

He shook his head. He whispered to her, explaining that Polly wouldn't ever be a party to what was being suggested. He said that perhaps they could meet some time, for a drink or for lunch. He would like to, he said; he wanted to.

She smiled. That night in the Ritz, she murmured, she hadn't wanted to be a blooming angel. "I wanted you," she murmured.

"That isn't true." He said it harshly. He pushed her away from him, wrenching himself free of her arms. It shocked him that she had gone so far, spoiling the past when there wasn't any need to. "You shouldn't have said that, Sue."

"You're sentimental."

He looked around for Polly and saw her dancing with a man who could hardly stand up. Some of the lights in the room had been switched off and the volume of the tape-recorder had been turned down. Simon and Garfunkel were whispering about Mrs Robinson. A woman laughed shrilly, kicking her shoes across the parquet.

Sue wasn't smiling any more. The face

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that looked up at him through the gloom was hard and accusing. Lines that weren't laughter lines had developed round the eyes: lines of tension and probably fury, Gavin reckoned. He could see her thinking: he had led her on, he had kissed the top of her head. Now he was suggesting lunch some time, dealing out the future to her when the present was what mattered. He felt he'd been rude.

"I'm sorry, Sue."

They were standing in the other dancers' way. He wanted to dance again himself, to feel the warmth of her small body, to feel her hands, and to smell her hair, and to bend down and touch it again with his lips. He turned away and extricated Polly from the grasp of the drunk who had claimed to love her. "It's time to go home," he said angrily.

"You're never going, old Gavin," Malcolm protested in the hall. "I'll run Poll home, you know."

"I'll run her home myself."

In the car Polly asked what had happened, but he didn't tell her the truth. He said he'd been rude to Sue because Sue had said something appalling about one of her guests and that for some silly reason he'd taken exception to it.

Polly did not believe him. He was making an excuse, but it didn't matter. He had rejected the game the Ryders had wanted to play and he had rejected it for her sake. He had stood by her and shown his respect for her, even though he had wanted to play the game himself. In the car she laid her head against the side of his shoulder. She thanked him, without specifying what she was grateful for.

"I feel terrible about being rude to Sue," he said.

He stopped the car outside their house. The light was burning in the sitting-room window. The babysitter would be half asleep. Everything was as it should be.

"I'd no right to be rude," Gavin said, still in the car.

"Sue'll understand."

"I don't know that she will."

She let the silence gather, hoping he'd break it by sighing or saying he'd telephone and apologise tomorrow, or simply saying he'd wait in the car for the babysitter. But he didn't sigh and he didn't speak.

"You could go back," she said calmly, in the end, "and say you're sorry. When you've driven the babysitter home."

He didn't reply. He sat gloomily staring at the steering wheel. She thought he began to shake his head, but she wasn't sure. Then he said:

"Yes, perhaps I should."

They left the car and walked together on the short paved path that led to their hall-door. She said that what she felt like was a cup of tea, and then thought how dull that sounded.

"Am I dull, Gavin?" she asked, whispering in case the words somehow carried in to the babysitter. Her calmness deserted her for a moment. "Am I?" she repeated, not whispering any more, not caring about the babysitter.

"Of course you're not dull. Darling, of course you aren't."

"Not to want to stay on? Not to want to go darting into beds with people?"

"Oh, don't be silly, Polly. They're all dull except you, darling. Every single one of them."

HE PUT HIS ARMS around her and kissed her, and she knew that he believed what he was saying. He believed she hadn't fallen as he and the Ryders had, that middle age had dealt no awful blows. In a way that seemed true to Polly, for it had often occurred to her that she, more than the other three, had survived the outer suburb. She was aware of pretences but could not pretend herself. She knew every time they walked into the local Tonino's that the local Tonino's was just an Italian joke, a sham compared with the reality of the original in Greek Street. She knew the party they'd just been to was a squalid little mess. She knew that when Gavin enthused about a fifteen-second commercial for soap his enthusiasm was no cause for celebration. She knew the suburb for what it was, its Volvos and Vauxhalls, its paved paths in unfenced front gardens, its crescents and avenues and immature trees, and the games its people played.

"All right, Polly?" he said, his arms still about her, with tenderness in his voice.

"Yes, of course." She wanted to thank him again, and to explain that she was thanking

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him because he had respected her feelings and stood by her. She wanted to ask him not to go back and apologise, but she couldn't bring herself to do that because the request seemed fussy. "Yes, of course I'm all right," she said.

In the sitting-room the babysitter woke up and reported that the children had been as good as gold. "Not a blink out of either of them, Mrs Dillard."

"I'll run you home," Gavin said.

"Oh, sir, it's miles and miles."

"It's our fault for living in such a god-forsaken suburb."

"Well, it's terribly nice of you, sir."

Polly paid her and asked her again what her name was because she'd forgotten. The girl repeated that it was Hannah McCarthy. She gave Polly her telephone number in case Estrella shouldn't be available on another occasion. She didn't at all mind coming out so far, she said.

When they'd gone Polly made tea in the kitchen. She placed the tea-pot and a cup and saucer on a tray and carried the tray upstairs to their bedroom. She was still the same as she'd always been, they would say to one another, lying there, her husband and her friend. They'd admire her for that, they'd share their guilt and their remorse. But they'd be wrong to say she was the same.

She took her clothes off and got into bed. The outer suburb was what it was, so was the shell of middle age: she didn't complain because it would be silly to complain when you were fed and clothed and comfortable, when your children were cared for and warm, when you were loved and respected. You couldn't forever weep with anger, or loudly deplore yourself and other people. You couldn't hit out with your fists as though you were back at the Misses Summers' nursery school in Putney. You couldn't forever laugh among the waiters at the Ritz just because it was fun to be there.

In bed she poured herself a cup of tea, telling herself that what had happened tonight—and what was probably happening now—was reasonable and even fair. She had rejected what was distasteful to her, he had stood by her and had respected her feelings; his unfaithfulness seemed his due. In her middle-aged calmness that was how she felt. She couldn't help it.

It was how she had fallen, she said to herself, but all that sounded silly now.

Admission

Welcome, sir, to purgatory.
You look like one who might have wintered here
Already.

How? The stance, man—the sheer
Extreme experienced weariness we come
To recognise,

The dazed courtesy, the shocked accuracy,
The almost-smile, on encountering once more
The intolerable.

Yes, you are welcome, sir, to purgatory.
Here is your uniform. We make no charge
On re-entry.

Elma Mitchell

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Vaclav Havel

An Open Letter

from Prague

DEAR DR HUSAK,

In our offices and factories, work goes on, discipline prevails. The efforts of our citizens are yielding visible results in a slowly rising standard of living: people build houses, buy cars, have children, amuse themselves, live their lives.

All this, of course, amounts to very little as a criterion for the success or failure of your policy. After every social upheaval, people invariably come back in the end to their daily labours, for the simple reason that they want to stay alive; they do so for their own sake, after all, not for the sake of this or that team of political leaders.

Not that going to work, doing the shopping and living their own lives is by any means all that people do. They do much more than that. They commit themselves to numerous output norms which they then fulfil and over-fulfil. They vote as one man and unanimously elect the candidates proposed to them. They are active in various political organisations. They attend meetings and demonstrations. They declare their support for everything they are supposed to. Nowhere can any sign of dissent be be seen from anything that the government does.

These facts, of course, are not to be made light of. One must ask seriously, at this point, whether all this does not confirm your success in achieving the tasks your political team set itself—those of winning the public's support and consolidating the situation in the country?

The answer must depend on what we mean by consolidation.

IN SO FAR AS IT IS TO BE MEASURED solely by statistical returns of various kinds, by official statements and police accounts of the public's political involvement, etc., then we can hardly feel any doubt that consolidation has been achieved.

But what if we take consolidation to mean something more, a genuine state of mind in society? Suppose we start to enquire after more durable, perhaps subtler and more imponderable, but none the less significant factors, *i.e.* what lies hidden behind all the figures by way of genuine personal, human experience? Suppose we ask, for example, what has been done for the moral and spiritual revival of society, for the enhancement of the truly human dimensions of life, for the elevation of man to a higher degree of dignity, for his truly free and authentic assertion in this world? What do we find when we thus turn our attention from the mere set of outward manifestations to their inner causes and consequences, their connections and meanings, in a word, to that less obvious plane of reality where those manifestations might actually acquire a general human meaning? Can we, then, still consider our society "consolidated"?

I make so bold as to answer No—to assert that, for all the outwardly appealing facts, inwardly our society, far from being a consolidated one, is, on the contrary, plunging ever deeper into a crisis more dangerous, in some respects, than any we can recall in our recent history.

I shall try to justify this assertion.

DR GUSTAV HUSAK *is, of course, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.*
VACLAV HAVEL, *who as a young writer played a prominent intellectual role in the 1968 reform movement ultimately suppressed by the Soviet military invasion, is best known for his plays "The Garden Party" (1963), "The Memorandum" (1965), and "The Increased Difficulty of Concentration" (1969). All three have been widely performed in translation in the West. Mr Havel is still living in Prague.*

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THE BASIC QUESTION one must ask is this: *why* are people in fact behaving in the way they do? Why do they do all these things that, taken together, form the impressive image of a totally united society giving total support to its government? For any unprejudiced observer, the answer is, I think, self-evident: they are driven to it by *fear*.

For fear of losing his job, the schoolmaster teaches things he does not believe: fearing for his future, the pupil repeats them after him; for fear of not being allowed to continue his studies, the young man joins the Youth League and participates in whatever of its activities is needful; fear that, under the monstrous system of political credits, his son or daughter will not acquire the necessary total of points for enrolment at a school leads the father to take on all manner of responsibilities and "voluntarily" to do everything required. Fear of the consequences of refusal leads people to take part in elections, to vote for the proposed candidates and to pretend that they regard such ceremonies as genuine elections. Out of fear for their livelihood, position or prospects, they go to meetings, vote for every resolution they have to, or at least keep silent. It is fear that carries them through sundry humiliating acts of self-criticism and penitence and the dishonest filling out of a mass of degrading questionnaires. Fear that someone might inform against them prevents them from giving public, and often even private, expression to their true opinions. It is the fear of suffering financial reverses and the effort to better themselves and ingratiate themselves with the authorities that in most cases makes working men put their names to "work commitments": indeed, the same motives often lie behind the establishment of Socialist Labour Brigades, in the clear realisation that their chief function is to be mentioned in the appropriate reports to higher levels. Fear causes people to attend all those official celebrations, demonstrations, and marches. Fear of being prevented from continuing their work leads many scientists and artists to give allegiance to ideas they do not in fact accept, to write things they do not agree with or know to be false, to join official organisations or to take part in work of whose value they have the lowest opinion, or to distort and mutilate their own works. In the effort to save themselves, many even report others for doing to them what they themselves have been doing to the people they report.

THE FEAR I AM SPEAKING OF is not, of course, to be taken in the ordinary psychological sense as a definite, precise emotion. Most of those we see around us are not quaking like aspen leaves; they wear the faces of confident, self-satisfied citizens. We are concerned with fear in a deeper sense, an ethical sense if you will, namely, the more or less conscious participation in the collective awareness of a permanent and ubiquitous endangerment; anxiety about what is being, or might be, endangered; becoming gradually used to this threat as a substantive part of the actual world; the ever-increasing degree to which, ever more skilfully and matter-of-factly, we go in for various kinds of external adaptation as the only effective method of self-defence.

Naturally, fear is not the only building block in the present social structure.

None the less, it is the main, the fundamental material, without which not even that surface uniformity, discipline and unanimity could be attained on which official documents base their assertions about the "consolidated" state of affairs in our country.

THE QUESTION ARISES, of course, what are people actually afraid of? Trials? torture? loss of property? deportation? executions? Certainly not. The most brutal forms of pressure exerted by the authorities upon the public are fortunately past history—at least in our circumstances. Today, oppression takes more subtle and choice forms. And even if political trials do not take place today—everyone knows how the authorities managed to manipulate them—they do represent an extreme threat, though the main thrust has moved into the sphere of existential pressure. Which, of course, leaves the core of the matter largely unchanged.

Notoriously, it is not the absolute value of a threat which counts, so much as its relative value. It is not so much what a man objectively loses, as the subjective importance it has for him on the plane on which he lives, with its own scale of values. Thus, if a man today is afraid, say, of losing the chance of working in his own field, this may be a fear as strong, and as productive of the same reactions as if—in another historical context—he had been threatened with the confiscation of his property. Indeed, the technique of existential pressure is, in a sense, more universal. For there is no one in our country who is not, in a broad sense, existentially vulnerable. Every-

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one has something to lose, and so everyone has reason to be afraid. The range of things a man can lose is a very wide one, extending from the manifold privileges of the ruling caste and all the special opportunities afforded to the powerful, such as the enjoyment of undisturbed work, advancement and earning power, the ability to work at all in one's own profession, the chance of higher education—down to the mere possibility of living in that limited degree of legal certainty available to other citizens, instead of finding oneself amongst the special class to whom not even those laws which apply to the rest of the public apply, in other words, amongst the victims of Czechoslovak political *apartheid.* Yes, everyone has something to lose. The humblest workman's mate can be shifted to a still worse job, even worse paid. Even he can pay a savage penalty for speaking his mind at a meeting or in the local café.

This system of existential pressure, embracing totally the whole of society and every individual, either as a specific everyday threat or as a general contingency, could not, of course, work effectively if it were not backed up—exactly like the older, more brutal forms of pressure—by its natural hinterland in the power structure, namely by that force which renders it comprehensive, complex and robust: the ubiquitous, omnipotent state police. For this is the hideous spider whose invisible web runs right through the whole of society; this is the point-at-infinity where all the lines of fear ultimately intersect; this is the final and irrefutable proof that no citizen can hope to challenge the power of the State. And even if most of the people, most of the time, cannot see this web with their own eyes, nor touch its threads, yet even the simplest citizen is well aware of its existence, assumes its silent presence at every moment in every place, and behaves accordingly —behaves, that is, so as to ensure the approval of those hidden eyes and ears.

And well does he know the importance of that approval. For the spider can intervene in a man's life without any need to have him in his jaws. There is no need at all for a man actually to be interrogated, charged, brought to trial or sentenced. For his superiors are also ensnared in the same web and at every level where his fate is decided there are people collaborating or forced to collaborate with the state police. Thus, the very fact that the state police are in a position at any time to intervene in a man's life, without his having any chance to resist, suffices to rob his life of some of its naturalness and authenticity, and to turn it into a kind of endless dissimulation.

IF IT IS FEAR THAT LIES BEHIND people's defensive attempts to preserve what they have, it becomes increasingly apparent that the chief impulse for their aggressive efforts to win what they do not yet possess is selfishness and careerism.

Seldom in recent times, it seems, has a social system offered scope so openly and so brazenly to people willing to support anything at any time, as long as it brings them some advantage; to unprincipled and spineless men, prepared to do anything in their craving for power and personal gain; to born lackeys, ready for any humiliation and willing at all times to sacrifice their neighbours and their own honour to ingratiate themselves with those in power. In view of this, it is not surprising that so many public and influential positions are occupied, more than ever before, by notorious careerists, opportunist charlatans and men of dubious record: in short, by typical collaborators; men, that is, with a special gift for persuading themselves at every turn that their dirty work is a way of rescuing something, or, at least, of preventing still worse men from stepping into their shoes. Nor is it surprising, in these circumstances, that corruption among public employees of all kinds, their willingness quite openly and in any situation to accept bribes and allow themselves shamelessly to be swayed by whatever considerations their various private interests and greed dictate, has reached a level higher than can be recalled during the last decade.

The number of people who sincerely believe everything that the official propaganda says and who selflessly support the government's authority is smaller than it has ever been. But the number of hypocrites rises steadily: up to a point, every citizen is, in fact, forced to be one.

This dispiriting situation has, of course, its logical causes. Seldom in recent times has a régime cared so little for the real attitudes of outwardly loyal citizens or for the sincerity of their statements—it is enough to observe that no one, in the course of all those self-criticisms and acts of penance, really cares whether people mean what they say, or are only considering their own advantages. In fact one can safely say that the second assumption is made more or less automatically, without anything immoral being

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seen in this. Indeed, the prospect of personal advantage is used as the main argument in obtaining such statements. No one tries to convince the penitent that he was in error, or acted wrongly, but simply, as a rule, that he must repent in order to save himself. At the same time, the benefits he stands to gain are colourfully magnified, while the bitter taste that will remain after the act of penance is played down and treated as an illusion. And if some eccentric should turn up who repented in all sincerity and showed it, for example, by refusing the appropriate reward on principle, the régime itself would, in all probability, find him an object of suspicion!

IT IS FAIR TO SAY that, in a way, we are all being publicly bribed. If you accept this or that office in your place of work—not, of course, as a means of serving your colleagues, but of serving the management—you will be rewarded with such-and-such privileges. If you join the Youth League, you will be given the right and access to such-and-such forms of entertainment. If, as a creative artist, you take part in such-and-such official functions, you will be rewarded with such-and-such genuine creative opportunities. Think what you like in private, as long as you agree in public, refrain from making difficulties, suppress your interest in truth, and silence your conscience—and the doors will be wide open to you.

If the principle of outward adaptation is made the keystone to success in society, what sort of human qualities will be encouraged and what sort of people, one may ask, will come to the fore?

From Despair to Conformity

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE ATTITUDE of timid self-defence vis-à-vis the world and that of aggressive eagerness to conquer the world for one's own benefit lies a range of feelings which it would be wrong to overlook, because they too play a significant role in forming the moral climate of today's "united society": feelings of *indifference* and everything that goes with them.

It is as if the shocks of recent history, and the kind of system subsequently established in this country, had led people to lose all faith in the future, in the possibility of setting public affairs right, in the sense of any struggle for truth and justice. They shrug off anything that goes beyond their everyday routine concern for their own livelihood. They seek all manner of escape routes: they succumb to apathy, indifference towards impersonal values and their fellow men, to spiritual passivity and depression. And anyone who still tries to resist by, for instance, refusing to adopt the principle of simulation as the key to survival, doubting the value of any self-fulfilment purchased at the cost of self-alienation—such a man appears to his ever more indifferent neighbours as an eccentric, a fool, a Don Quixote, and in the end is regarded inevitably with some aversion, like anyone who behaves differently from the rest and in a way which moreover threatens to hold up a critical mirror before their eyes.

Or, again, those indifferent neighbours may expel such a man from their midst or shun him, as required, for appearances' sake, while sympathising with him, in secret or in private, hoping to still their conscience by clandestine approval of a person who acts as they themselves should, but cannot.

Paradoxically, though, this indifference has become a very active social force. For can one deny that it is plain indifference, rather than fear, that brings many to the voting booth, to meetings, to membership of official organisations? Is not the political support for the régime, which seems to be so successfully supplied, to a large degree a mere matter of routine, of habit, of automatism, of laziness, actually backed by nothing but total resignation? Participation in all the political rituals that no one believes in is pointless; still at least it does ensure a quiet life—and would it be any less pointless *not* to participate? One would gain nothing, and lose the quiet life into the bargain.

Most people are loth to spend their days in ceaseless conflict with authority, especially when it can only end in the defeat of the isolated individual. So why not do what is required of you? It costs you nothing, and in time you cease to bother about it. It is not worth a moment's thought.

Despair leads to apathy, apathy to conformity, conformity to routine performance—which is then quoted as evidence of "mass political involvement." All this goes to make up the contemporary concept of "normal" behaviour—a concept which is in essence deeply pessimistic.

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Private and Public Sectors

THE MORE COMPLETELY MEN ABANDON any hope of general reform, any interest in impersonal goals and values, or any chance of exercising influence in an "outward" direction, the more their energy is diverted in the direction of least resistance, *i.e.* "inwards." People are thinking today far more of themselves, their homes and their families. It is there that they find rest, there that they can forget all the world's folly and freely exercise their creative talents. They fill their homes with all kinds of equipment and pretty things; they try to raise their housing standard; they make life agreeable for themselves, building cottages, looking after their cars, taking more interest in their food and clothing and domestic comfort. In short they turn their main attention to the material aspects of their private lives.

Clearly this social orientation has favourable economic results. It encourages improvements in the neglected fields of consumer goods production and public services. It helps to raise the general living standard. Economically regarded, it represents a significant source of dynamic energy, able to succeed, at least partially, in developing society's material wealth, which the inflexible, bureaucratised and unproductive state sector of the economy could hardly ever hope to accomplish. (One need merely compare state and private house-building industries as to quantity and quality.)

The authorities welcome and support this spill-over of energy into the private sphere.

But why? Because of its favourable effects as a stimulus of economic growth? Certainly that is one reason. But the whole spirit of current political propaganda and practice, quietly but systematically applauding this "inward" orientation as the very essence of human fulfilment on earth, shows only too clearly why the authorities really welcome this transfer of energy. They see it for what it really is in its psychological origins: an escape from the sphere of public activity. Rightly divining that such surplus energy, if directed "outward", must sooner or later turn against them—*i.e.* against the particular forms of power they obstinately cling to—they do not hesitate to represent as human life what is really a desperate substitute for living. In the interest of the smooth management of society, then, society's attention is deliberately diverted from itself, that is, from social concerns. By nailing a man's whole attention to the floor of his mere consumer interests, it is hoped to render him incapable of appreciating the ever-increasing degree of his spiritual, political and moral degradation. Reducing him to a simple vessel for the ideals of a primitive consumer society is supposed to turn him into pliable material for complex manipulation. The danger that he might conceive a longing for one of the innumerable, unforeseeable roles that his manhood fits him to play is intended to be nipped in the bud by imprisoning him within the wretched range of parts that he can perform as a consumer, subject to the limitations of a centrally directed market.

ALL THE EVIDENCE SUGGESTS that the authorities are applying a method quite adequate for dealing with a creature whose only aim is self-preservation. Seeking the path of least resistance, they completely ignore the price that must be paid—the harsh assault on human integrity, the brutal castration of the humanity of men.

Yet these same authorities justify themselves with obsessive insistence by their revolutionary ideology, in which the ideal of man's total liberation has a central place! But what, in fact, has happened to the concept of human personality and its many-sided, harmonious and authentic growth? of man liberated from the clutches of an alienating social machinery, from a mythical hierarchy of values, formalised freedoms from the dictatorship of property, the fetish and the might of money? What has happened to the idea that a man should live in full enjoyment of social and legal justice, have a creative share in economic and political power, be raised on high in his human dignity and become truly himself? Instead of free economic decision-sharing, free participation in political life and free intellectual advancement, all he is actually offered is a chance freely to choose which washing-machine or refrigerator he wants to buy.

In the foreground, then, stands the imposing façade of great humanistic ideals—and behind it crouches the modest family house of a socialist bourgeois! On the one side, bombastic slogans about the unprecedented increase in every sort of freedom and the unique structural variety of life—on the other side, unprecedented drabness and the squalor of life reduced to a hunt for goods.

SOMEWHERE AT THE TOP of the hierarchy of pressures by which man is manipulated into becoming an obedient member of a consumer

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herd, there stands, as I have hinted, a concealed, omnipotent force: the state police. It is no coincidence, I suppose, that this body should so aptly illustrate the gulf that separates the ideological façade from everyday reality.

Anyone who has had the bad luck to experience personally the "work-style" of that institution must be highly amused at the official explanation of its purpose. Does anyone really believe that that shabby swarm of thousands of petty informers, professional narks, complex-ridden, sly, envious, malevolent *petit bourgeois* and bureaucrats, that malodorous gob of treachery, evasion, fraud, gossip and intrigue, shows the imprint of the working man, guarding the people's government and its revolutionary achievements against its "enemies' designs"? For who would be more hostile to a true workers' government—if everything were not upside down—than your *petit bourgeois*, always ready to oblige and sticking at nothing, soothing his arthritic self-esteem by informing on his fellow-citizens, a creature clearly discernible behind the regular procedures of the secret police as the true spiritual author of their "work style." I think it would be hard to explain this whole grotesque contrast between theory and practice, except as a natural consequence of the real mission of the state police today: which is not to protect the free development of man from any assailants, but to protect the assailants from the threat that any real attempt at man's free development represents.

The contrast between the revolutionary teachings about the new man and the new morality and the shoddy concept of life as consumer bliss raises the question: why do the authorities actually cling so frantically to their ideology? Clearly, only because their ideology, as a conventionalised system of ritual communication, assures them the appearance of legitimacy, continuity, and consistency, and serves as a screen of prestige for their opportunistic practice.

The actual aims of this practice do, of course, leave their traces on the official ideology at every point. From the bowels of that infinite mountain of ideological rhetoric by which the authorities ceaselessly try to sway people's minds, and which —as its communication value is nil—the public, for the most part, scarcely notices, there emerges one specific and meaningful message, one realistic piece of advice: "Avoid politics if you can—leave it to us! Just do what we tell you, don't try to have deep thoughts and don't poke your nose into things that don't concern you! Shut up, do your work, look after yourself—and you'll be all right!"

This advice is heeded. That one needs to make a living is, after all, the one point on which a man can rather easily agree with his government. Why not, then, make good use of it? Especially when one has no other choice anyway.

WHERE IS THE WHOLE SITUATION which I have tried to outline here ultimately leading? What, in other words, is the effect on people of a system based on fear and apathy, a system that drives each man into a foxhole of purely material existence and offers him deceit as the main form of communication with society? To what level is a society reduced by a policy where the only aim is superficial order and general obedience regardless of by what means and at what price they have been gained?

It needs little imagination to see that such a situation can only lead towards the gradual erosion of all moral standards, the breakdown of all criteria of decency and the widespread destruction of confidence in the meaning of any such values as truth, adherence to principles, sincerity, altruism, dignity and honour. Life must needs sink to a biological, vegetable level amidst a demoralisation "in depth" stemming from the loss of hope and the loss of the belief that life has a meaning. It can but confront us once more with that tragic aspect of man's status in modern technological civilisation marked by a declining awareness of the absolute, which I propose to call a crisis of human identity. For how can the collapse of man's identity be slowed down by a system that so harshly requires a man to be something other than he is?

Order has been established. At the price of a paralysis of the spirit, deadening of the heart and devastation of life.

Surface "consolidation" has been achieved. At the price of a spiritual and moral crisis in society.

Unfortunately, the worst feature of this crisis is that it keeps deepening. We only need to raise our sights a little above our limited daily perspective in order to realise with horror how hastily we are all abandoning positions which only yesterday we refused to desert. What social conscience only yesterday regarded as improper

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is today casually excused; tomorrow it will evidently be thought natural, and the next day held up as a model of behaviour. What yesterday we declared impossible, or at least averred we would never get accustomed to, today we accept without astonishment as a fact of life. And, conversely, things that a little while ago we took for granted we now treat as exceptional; and soon—who knows—might think of them as unattainable chimeras.

The changes in our assessment of the "natural" and the "normal", the shifts in moral attitudes in our society over the past few years, have been greater than they might appear at first glance. As our insensitivity has increased, so naturally our ability to discern our own insensitivity has declined. The malady has spread, as it were, from the fruit and the foliage to the trunk and roots. The most serious grounds for alarm, then, are the prospects which the present state of affairs opens up for the future.

Cultural Wasteland

THE MAIN ROUTE by which society is inwardly enlarged, enriched and cultivated is that of coming to know itself in ever greater depth, range and subtlety.

The main instrument of society's self-knowledge is its *culture*: culture as a specific field of human activity, influencing the general state of mind—albeit often very indirectly—and at the same time continually subject to its influence.

Where total control over society completely suppresses its differentiated inner development, the first thing to be suppressed is invariably its culture: not just "automatically" as a phenomenon intrinsically opposed to the "spirit" of social manipulation, but as a matter of deliberate "programming" inspired by justified anxiety lest society be alerted to the extent of its own subjugation through that culture which gives it its self-awareness. It is culture that enables a society to enlarge its liberty and to discover truth—so what appeal can it have for the authorities who are basically concerned to suppress such values? There is only one kind of truth they recognise—the kind they need at the given moment. And only one kind of liberty: to proclaim that "truth."

A world where "truth" flourishes not in a dialectic climate of genuine knowledge but in a climate of power motives is a world of mental sterility, petrified dogmas, rigid and unchangeable creeds leading inevitably to creedless despotism. This is a world of prohibitions and limitations and of orders, a world where cultural policy means primarily the operations of a cultural police force.

Much has been said and written about the peculiar degree of devastation which our contemporary culture has reached; about the hundreds of prohibited books and authors and the dozens of liquidated periodicals; about the mutilation of publishers' projects and theatre repertoires and the cutting off of all contact with the intellectual community; about the plundering of exhibition rooms; about the grotesque range of persecution and discrimination practised in this field; about the breaking up of all the former artistic associations and countless scholarly institutes and their replacement with kinds of dummies run by little gangs of aggressive fanatics, notorious careerists, incorrigible cowards and incompetent upstarts anxious to seize their opportunity in the general void. Rather than describe all these things again, I will offer some reflections on those deeper aspects of this state of affairs which are germane to the subject-matter of my letter.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, however bad the present situation, it still does not mean that culture has ceased to exist altogether. Plays are put on, television programmes go out every day, and even books get published. But this overt and legal cultural activity, taken as a whole, exhibits one basic feature—an overall *externalisation* due to its being estranged in large measure from its proper substance through its total emasculation as an instrument of human, and so of social, self-awareness. And whenever, even today, something of incontestably excellent value appears—a superb dramatic performance, let us say, to remain in the sphere of the arts—then it appears rather as a phenomenon to be tolerated because of its subtlety and refinement, and hence, from an official point of view, its relative innocuousness as a contribution to social self-awareness. Yet, even here, no sooner does that contribution begin to be at all keenly perceived than the authorities start instinctively to defend themselves: there are familiar instances where a good actor was banned, by and large, simply for being too good.

But that is not what concerns me at this point. What interests me is how this externalisation works in fields where it is possible to describe

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human experience of the environment far more explicitly and where the function of promoting social self-awareness is, thus, far more manifestly fulfilled.

I will quote an example. Suppose a literary work, a drama perhaps, undeniably skilful, evocative, ingenious, meaningful, is published (it does happen from time to time). Whatever the other qualities of the work may be, of one thing we may always be perfectly certain. Whether through censorship or self-censorship, because of the writer's character or his self-deception, as a consequence of resignation or of calculation, it will never stray one inch beyond the taboos of a banal, conventional and, hence, basically fraudulent social consciousness that offers and accepts as genuine experience the mere appearance of experience—a concatenation of smooth, hackneyed, superficial trivia of experience, that is pallid reflections of such aspects of experience as the social consciousness has long since adopted and domesticated. Despite, or rather because of, this fact, there will always be people who find such a work entertaining, exciting, and interesting, although it sheds no light on anything by any flash of real insight revealing what was unknown, expressing what had never been said or providing new, spontaneous and effective evidence of things hitherto only guessed at. By imitating the real world, in short, such a work in fact falsifies the real world. As regards the actual forms this externalisation takes, it is no accident that the vat most frequently tapped should be the one which, thanks to its proven harmlessness, enjoys the warmest approval of the authorities in our country, whether bourgeois or proletarian. I refer to the aesthetics of banality, safely housed within the four walls of good-natured *petit-bourgeois* morality; the sentimental philosophy of country-bumpkin earthiness, kitchen-sink joviality, and the provincial *Weltanschauung* based on the belief in its general benevolence. I refer to the aesthetic doctrine whose keystone is the cult of right-thinking mediocrity, bedded in hoary national self-satisfaction, guided by the principle that everything must be slick, trivial and pre-digested, culminating in that false optimism which puts the drabbest interpretation on the dictum that "truth will prevail."

OF WORKS DESIGNED TO GIVE literary expression to the government's political ideology there is today—as you must be aware—an extreme scarcity, and those few, by professional standards, are clearly bad. This is not merely because there is no one to write them, but also, I am sure, paradoxical as it may appear, because they would not be particularly welcome. For from the standpoint of actual contemporary attitudes (those of the consumer society, that is) even if such works were available, proved professionally competent, and attracted somebody's interest, they would divert too much attention "outwards", rub salt into too many old wounds, provoke—through their general and radical political character—too much general and radical political reaction, thus stirring up too many pools that are supposed to be left as stagnant as possible. What far better suits the real interests of the authorities today is what I have called the aesthetics of banality, which misses the truth much more inconspicuously, acceptably and plausibly, and (since it is naturally far more digestible for the conventional mind) is far better calculated to perform the role accorded to culture in the consumer philosophy—not to excite people with the truth, but to reassure them with lies.

It is this kind of artistic output which has naturally always predominated. But in our country there had always been some chinks, at least, through which the public received works that could truthfully be said to convey a more genuine kind of human self-awareness. The road for such works of art was never particularly smooth. They met resistance not only from the authorities, but from easy-going and sluggish conventional attitudes as well. Yet until recently they had always managed in some mysterious way, by devious paths and seldom without delay, to get through to the individual and to society and so to fulfil the role of culture as the agent of social self-awareness.

This is all that really matters. This is precisely what I take to be really important. And it is also precisely this that the present government—and it can be shown that the achievement is unprecedented since the age of our National Revival—has managed to render almost completely impossible, so absolute is the present system of bureaucratic control of culture, so perfect the surveillance of every chink through which some major work might see the light of day, so great the fear of government and the fear of art entertained by that little band of men who have gathered into their own pockets the keys of every door.

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On Losing a Journal

YOU WILL, OF COURSE, appreciate that I am speaking at this moment not of the ample indices listing the names of all creative artists subject to a total or partial ban, but of a much worse list—of that "blank index" which includes, *a priori,* everything that might contain the spark of a slightly original thought, perceptive insight, deeper sincerity, unusual idea or suggestive form. I am speaking of that open warrant for the arrest of anything inwardly free and, therefore, in the deepest sense "cultural." I am speaking of the warrant for the arrest of culture, issued by your government.

Once more the question arises which I have been posing from the start. What does it all really mean? Where is it leading? What, so to speak, is it going to do to society?

Once more, I take a particular case. Most of the former cultural periodicals, as we know, have ceased to appear in our country. If any have survived, they have been so *gleichgeschaltet* that they are hardly worth considering. What has been the effect of that?

At first glance, practically none. The wheels of society continue to go round, even without all those literary, artistic, theatrical, philosophical, historical and other magazines whose number, even while they existed, never measured up to the latent needs of society, but which were around and played their part. How many people today still miss those publications? Only the few tens of thousands of people who subscribed to them—a very small fraction of society.

Yet this loss is infinitely deeper and more significant than might appear from the numbers involved. Its real implications are again, of course, hidden and can hardly be assessed precisely.

The forcible liquidation of such a journal—a theoretical review concerned with the theatre, say—is not just a particular impoverishment of its particular readers. It is not even merely a severe blow to theatrical culture. It is simultaneously and above all the liquidation of a particular organ of society's self-awareness and, hence, an interference, hard to describe in exact terms, in the complex system of circulation, exchange and conversion of nutrients that maintain life in the many-layered organism which is society today; a blow against the natural dynamic of the processes going on within that organism; a disturbance of the balanced interplay of all its various functions, an interplay reflecting the level of complexity reached by society's anatomy. And just as a chronic deficiency of a given vitamin (amounting in quantitative terms only to a negligible fraction of the human diet) can make a man ill, so in the long run, the loss of a single periodical can cause the social organism much greater damage than would appear at first sight. And what if the loss involves not just one periodical, but virtually all?

IT IS EASY TO SHOW that the real importance of knowledge, thought and creation is not limited, in the stratified world of a civilised society, to the significance these things have for the particular circle of people primarily, directly and, as it were, physically involved with them, whether actively or passively. This is always a small group, especially in the sciences. Yet the knowledge in question, conveyed through however many intermediaries, may in the end very profoundly affect the whole of society, just as politics, including the nuclear threat, physically concerns each of us, even though most of us have had no experience of the speculations in theoretical physics which led to the manufacture of the atom bomb.

That the same holds for non-scientific knowledge is shown by many historic instances of an unprecedented cultural, political and moral upsurge throughout society, where the original nucleus of crystallisation or catalyst was an act of social self-awareness carried out, and indeed directly and "physically" perceived, only by a quite small and exclusive circle. Even subsequently, that act may have remained outside the apperception of society at large, yet it was still an indispensable condition of its usage. For we never know when some inconspicuous spark of knowledge, struck within range of the few brain cells, as it were, specially adapted for the organism's self-awareness, may suddenly light up the road for the whole of society, without its ever finding out, perhaps, how it came to see the road.

But that is far from being the whole story. For even those other innumerable flashes of knowledge which never illuminate the path ahead for society as a whole have their deep social importance, if only through the mere fact that *they happened*: that they *might* have cast light; that in their sheer occurrence they fulfilled a certain range of society's potentialities—either its creative powers or simply its liberties. They, too, help to make and maintain a *climate of civilisation* without which

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none of the more effective flashes could ever occur. In short, the space within which spiritual self-awareness operates is indivisible; the cutting of a single thread must injure the coherence of the whole network, and this itself shows the remarkable interdependence of all those fine processes in the social organism that I spoke of, the transcendent importance of each one of them and hence the transcendent destructiveness wrought by its disturbance.

On Missing Novels

I WOULD NOT WISH to reduce everything to this single and still relatively minor aspect of the problem. Still, does it not in itself confirm the deeply injurious influence on the general spiritual and moral state of society that the "warrant for the arrest of culture" already has and, above all, will have in future even though its immediate impact is only on a fairly limited number of minds?

If not a single new Czech novel has appeared in recent years in the bookshops of which one could safely say that it enlarges our experience of the world, this will certainly have no public effect. Readers are not going to demonstrate in the streets, and in the last resort one always finds something to read. But who will dare assess the real significance of this fact for Czech society? Who knows how the gap will affect the spiritual and moral climate of the years to come? How far will it weaken our ability to "know ourselves"? How deeply will such an absence of cultural self-knowledge brand those whose self-knowing begins only today or tomorrow? What mounds of mystification, slowly forming in the general cultural consciousness, will need to be chipped away? How far back will one need to go? Who can tell what people will still find the strength to light new fires of truth, when, how and from what resources, once there has been such thorough wastage not only of the fuel, but of *the very feeling that it can be done*?

A few novels of the kind missing from the bookshops do nevertheless exist: they circulate in manuscript. So, in this respect, the situation is not yet hopeless: it follows from everything I have said that if such a novel went around for years unknown to all but twenty people, its existence would still be important. It means something that such a book is here, that it could be written at all, that it lives in at least one tiny area of the cultural consciousness. But what about the fields in which it is impossible to work except through the so-called legal channels? How can one estimate the actual extent of damage already done, and yet to be done, by strangling every interesting development in the stage and cinema, whose role as social stimuli is so specific? How much greater still may be the long term effect of the vacuum in the humanities, in the theory and practice of social sciences? Who dares measure the consequences of violently interrupting the various long processes of self-knowledge in ontology, ethics and historiography, dependent as they are on access to sources and on ongoing public debate, the consequences in general of damming up any normal circulation of information, ideas, discoveries and values, any public crystallisation of attitudes?

The overall question, then, is this: what profound intellectual and moral impotence will the nation suffer tomorrow, following the castration of its culture today?

I fear that the baneful effects on society will outlast by many years the particular political interests that give rise to them. So much the more guilty, in the eyes of history, those who have sacrificed the country's spiritual future for the sake of their power interests today.

Entropy & Our Life

JUST AS THE CONSTANT INCREASE OF entropy is the basic law of the universe, so it is the basic law of life to be ever more highly structured and to struggle against entropy. Life rebels against all uniformity and levelling; its aim is not sameness but variety, the restlessness of transcendence, the adventure of novelty and rebellion against the *status quo*. An essential condition for its enhancement is the secret constantly made manifest.

On the other hand, the essence of authority whose aim is reduced to protecting its own permanence by forcibly imposing the uniformity of perpetual consent consists in a fundamental distrust of all variety, uniqueness, and transcendence; in fundamental aversion to everything unknown, impalpable and currently obscure; in basic proclivity for the uniform, the identical and the inert; in deep affection for the *status quo*. The mechanical spirit prevails in it over the vital. The order it strives for is no frank quest for ever higher forms of social self-organisation, equivalent to its evolving complexity of structure, but,

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on the contrary, a decline towards that "state of maximum probability" representing the climax of entropy. Following the direction of entropy, it goes against the direction of life.

In a man's life, as we know, there is a moment when the complexity of structure begins suddenly to decline and his path turns in the direction of entropy. This is the moment when he, too, succumbs to the general law of the universe: the moment of death.

Somewhere at the bottom of every political authority which has chosen the path to entropy (and would like to treat the individual as a computer into which any programme can be fed with the assurance that he will carry it out) there lies hidden the *death-principle*. There is an odour of death even in the notion of "order" which such an authority puts into practice and which sees every manifestation of genuine life, every exceptional deed, individual expression, unique thought, every unusual idea or wish, as a red light signalling Confusion, Chaos, and Anarchy.

The entire political practice of the present régime, as I have tried to outline it here step by step, confirms that those concepts which were always crucial for its programme—order, calm, consolidation, "guiding the nation out of its crisis", "halting disruption", "assuaging hot tempers", and so on—have finally acquired the same lethal meaning that they have for every régime committed to "entropy."

True enough, order prevails: a bureaucratic order of grey monotony that stifles all individuality; of mechanical precision that suppresses everything of unique quality; of musty inertia that excludes the transcendent. What prevails is order without life.

True enough, the country is calm. Calm, would you not say, as a morgue or a grave?

A Historyless People

IN A SOCIETY which is really alive there is, naturally, always something happening. The interplay of current activities and events, of overt and concealed movement, produces a constant succession of unique situations that provoke further action and fresh movement. The mysterious, vital polarity of the continuous and the changing, the regular and the random, the foreseen and the unexpected, has its effect in the "time-dimension" and is borne out in the flow of events. The more highly structured the life of a society, the more highly structured its time-dimension becomes and the more prominent the element of uniqueness and unrepeatability within that time-flow. This in turn, of course, makes it more possible to reflect its sequential character; to represent it, that is, as an irreversible stream of non-interchangeable situations, and so in retrospect to understand better whatever in the life of society is governed by regular laws. The richer the life that society lives, then, the more clearly it perceives the dimension of social time, *the dimension of history*.

In other words, wherever there is room for social activity, room is created for a social memory as well. Any society that is alive is a society with a history.

If the element of continuity and causality is so vitally linked in history with the element of unrepeatability and unpredictability, we may well ask how true history—that inextinguishable source of "chaos", fountainhead of unrest, and a slap in the face for law and order—can ever exist in a world ruled by an "entropic" régime.

The answer is plain: it cannot. And, indeed, it does not—on the surface, anyway. Under such a régime, the elimination of life in the proper sense brings social time to a halt, so that history disappears from its purview.

In our own country too, one has the impression that for some time past there has been no history. Slowly but surely we are losing the sense of time. We begin to forget what happened when, what came earlier and what later, and we are gradually dominated by the feeling that it really doesn't matter. As uniqueness disappears from the flow of events, so does continuity; everything merges into the single grey image of one and the same cycle and we say "Nothing is happening." Here, too, a deadly order has been imposed: all activity is completely organised and so completely deadened. The deadening of the sense of time-sequence in society inevitably kills it in private life as well. No longer backed by social history or the history of the individual position within it, private life declines to a prehistoric level where time derives its only rhythm from such events as birth, marriage, and death.

The loss of the sense of social time seems in every way to cast society back into the primaeval state where, for thousands of years, humanity could get no further in measuring it than by the cosmic and climatic pattern of endlessly repeated annual seasons and the religious rites associated with them.

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The gap left by the disquieting dimension of history has, naturally, to be filled. So the disorder of real history is replaced by the orderliness of *pseudo-history*, whose author is not the life of a society, but an official planner. Instead of events we are offered non-events; we live from anniversary to anniversary, from celebration to celebration, from parade to parade, from an unanimous congress to unanimous elections and back again; from a Press Day to an Artillery Day, and *vice versa*. It is no coincidence that, thanks to this substitute for history, we are able to review everything that is happening in society, past and future too, by simply glancing at the calendar. And the notoriously familiar character of the recurrent rituals makes such information quite as adequate as if we had been present at the events themselves.

What we have, then, is perfect order—at the cost, however, of reverting to prehistory. Even so, we must enter a *caveat*: whereas for our ancestors the repeated rituals always had a deep existential meaning, for us they are merely a routine performed for its own sake. The government keeps them going to maintain the impression that history is moving. The public goes through the motions to keep out of trouble.

AN "ENTROPIC" REGIME has one means of increasing the general entropy within its own sphere of influence, namely, by tightening its own central control, rendering itself more monolithic, and enclosing society in an ever more comprehensive and impermeable straitjacket for unilinear manipulation. But with every step it takes in this direction it inevitably increases its own entropy too.

In an effort to immobilise the world, it immobilises itself, undermining its own ability to cope with anything new or to resist the natural currents of life. The "entropic" régime is, thus, essentially doomed to become at last the victim of *its own lethal principle*, and the most vulnerable victim at that, thanks to the absence of any impulse within its own structure that could, as it were, make it face up to itself. Life itself, by contrast, with its irrepressible urge to oppose entropy, is able all the more successfully and inventively to resist being violated, the faster the violating authority succumbs to its own sclerosis.

In trying to paralyse life, then, the authorities paralyse themselves and in the long run incapacitate themselves for paralysing life.

In other words, life may be subjected to a prolonged and thorough process of violation, enfeeblement, anaesthesia. Yet in the end it cannot be permanently halted. Albeit quietly, covertly, and slowly, it nevertheless goes on. Though it be estranged from itself a thousand times, in some way it always manages to recuperate; however violently ravished, it always finally survives the power that ravished it. It cannot be otherwise, in view of the profoundly ambivalent nature of every "entropic" authority, which can only suppress life if there is life to suppress and so, in the last resort, depends for its own existence on life whereas life in no way depends on it. The only force that can truly destroy life on our planet is the force that knows no compromise: the universal validity of the second law of thermodynamics.

If life cannot be destroyed for good, neither, then, can history be entirely brought to a halt. A secret streamlet trickles on beneath the heavy crust of inertia and pseudo-events, slowly and inconspicuously undercutting it. It may be a long process, but one day it has to happen: the crust can no longer hold and starts to crack.

This is the moment when something once more begins visibly to *happen*, something truly new and unique, something unscheduled in the official calendar of "happenings", something that makes us no longer indifferent to what occurs and when. Something truly historic in the sense that history again demands to be heard.

BUT HOW, in our particular circumstances, could it come about that history "demands to be heard"? What does such a prospect really imply? I am neither historian nor prophet, yet there are some observations touching on the structure of these "moments" which one cannot avoid making.

Wherever there is, in some degree, open competition for power as the only real guarantee of public control over its exercise and, in the last resort, the only guarantee of free speech, the political authorities must willy-nilly participate in some kind of permanent and overt dialogue with the life of society. They are forced continually to wrestle with all kinds of questions which life puts to them. Wherever no such competition exists and freedom of speech is therefore, of necessity, sooner or later suppressed—as is the case with every "entropic" régime—the authorities, instead of adapting themselves to life, try to adapt life to themselves. Instead of coping openly and continually with real conflicts, demands and issues, they simply draw a veil

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over them. Yet somewhere under the lid, those conflicts and demands continue, grow and multiply only to burst forth as a certain moment arrives when the crust can no longer hold them down. That is the moment when the dead weight of inertia crumbles and history steps out again into the arena.

And what happens after that?

The authorities are still strong enough, to be sure, to prevent those vital conflicts from issuing in the shape of open discussion or open rivalry for power. But they no longer have the strength to resist this pressure altogether. So life vents itself where it can—in the secret corridors of power, where it can insist on secret discussion and finally on secret competition. For this, of course, the authorities are unprepared: any substantive dialogue with life is outside their range of competence. So they panic. Life sows confusion in their council-chambers in the shape of personal quarrels, intrigues, snares and confrontations; and even infects, as it were, their own representatives: the death mask of impersonality that their officials wore to identify themselves with the monolith of power is suddenly dropped, revealing live people competing for power in the most "human" way and struggling in self-defence, one against the other. This is the notorious moment for palace revolutions and *putsches*, for sudden and outwardly mystifying changes of portfolio and changes of key notes in set speeches; the moment when real or construed conspiracies and secret centres are revealed; the moment when real or imaginary crimes are made known and ancient guilt unearthed; the moment for mutual dismissals from office, mutual denigration and perhaps even arrests and trials. Whereas before every man in authority had spoken the same language, used the same clichés, applauded successful fulfilment of the same targets, now suddenly the monolith of power breaks down into distinguishable persons, still speaking the same language, but using it to make personal attacks on one another. And we learn with astonishment that some of them—those who lost, that is, in the secret struggle for power—had never taken their targets seriously and never successfully fulfilled them, far from it, whereas others—the winners, that is—had really meant what they said and are alone capable of achieving their aims.

The more rational the construction of the official calendar of non-events over the years, the more irrational the effect of a sudden eruption of genuine history. All its long-suppressed elements of unrepeatablity, uniqueness and incalculability, all its long-denied mysteries, come rushing through the breach. Where for years we had been denied the slightest, most ordinary surprise, now life is one huge surprise—and it is well worth it. The whole disorderliness of history, concealed under artificial order for years, suddenly spurts out.

How well we know all this! How often we have witnessed it in our part of the world! The machine that worked for years to apparent perfection, faultlessly, without a hitch, falls apart overnight. The system that seemed likely to reign unchanged, world without end, since nothing could call its power in question amid all those unanimous votes and elections, is shattered without warning. And, to our amazement, we find that everything was quite otherwise than we had thought.

The moment when such a tornado whirls through the musty edifice of petrified power-structures is, of course, far from being just a source of amusement for all of us who are outside the ramparts of authority. For we, too, are always involved, albeit indirectly. Is it not the quiet, perennial pressure of life, the ceaselessly resisted but finally irresistible demands and interests of all society, its conflicts and its tensions, which ever and again shake the foundations of power? No wonder that society continually reawakens at such moments, attaches itself to them, receives them with great alertness, is excited by them and seeks to exploit them! In almost every case such tremors provoke hopes or fears of one kind or another, create—or seem to create—scope for the realisation of life's various impulses and ambitions, and accelerate all kinds of movements within society.

Yet, in almost every case, it is equally true that this situation, due to the basically unnatural structure of the kind of confrontation with life such sudden shake-ups of power bring about, carries with it many and incalculable risks.

I shall try to illuminate further one such risk.

Of Humiliation & Passion

If a man takes orders every day in silence from an incompetent superior, if every day he solemnly performs ritual acts which he privately finds ridiculous, if he unhesitatingly answers questionnaires in a sense contrary to his real opinions and is prepared to deny his own self in public, if he sees no difficulty in feigning sympathy or even affection where in fact he feels

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only indifference or aversion, it still does not mean that he has entirely lost the use of one of the basic human senses, namely the *sense of humiliation.*

On the contrary: even if they never speak of it, people have a very acute appreciation of the price they have paid for outward peace and quiet —humiliation of their human dignity in permanence. The less direct resistance they put up to it—comforting themselves by driving it from their mind and deceiving themselves with the thought that it is of no account, or else simply gritting their teeth—the deeper the experience etches itself into their emotional memory. The man who can resist humiliation can quickly forget it; but the man who can long tolerate it must also long remember it. In actual fact, then, nothing remains forgotten. All the fear one has endured, the dissimulation one has been forced into, all the painful and degrading buffoonery, and, worst of all, perhaps, the feeling of displaying cowardice—and this settles and accumulates somewhere at the depths of our social consciousness, quietly fermenting.

Clearly, this is no healthy situation. Left untreated, the abscesses suppurate; the pus cannot escape from the body and the malady spreads throughout the organism; the natural human emotion is denied the process of objectivisation and instead, caged up over long periods in the emotional memory alone, is gradually deformed into a sick cramp, into a toxic substance not unlike the carbon monoxide produced by incomplete combustion.

No wonder, then, that when the crust cracks and the lava of life rolls out, there appear not only well-considered attempts to rectify old wrongs, not only searchings for truth and for reforms matching life's needs, but also symptoms of bilious hatred, vengeful wrath, and a kind of feverish desire for immediate satisfaction for all the endured degradation. (The impulsive and often wayward forms of this desire may also spring largely from a vague impression that the whole outbreak has come too late, at a time when it has lost its meaning, having no longer any immediate motive and so carrying no immediate risk, when it is actually just an *ersatz* for something that should have happened in a quite different context.)

No wonder, again, that the men in power, accustomed for years to absolute agreement, unanimous and unreserved support, and a total unity of total pretence, are so shocked by the upsurge of suppressed feelings at such a moment that they feel exposed to an unheard-of threat and, in this mood (assuming themselves to be the sole guarantors of the world's survival), detect such an unprecedented threat to the rest of the world, too, that they do not hesitate to call up hosts of foreign soldiers to save both themselves and it.

WE EXPERIENCED ONE SUCH EXPLOSION not long ago. Those who had spent years humiliating and insulting people, and were then so shocked when those people tried to raise their own voices, now label the whole episode an "outbreak of passions." And what, pray, were the passions that broke out? Those who know what protracted and thorough-going humiliations had preceded the explosion, and who understand the psycho-social mechanics of the subsequent reaction to them, should be more surprised at the relatively calm, objective and indeed loyal form which the "explosion" took. Yet, as everyone knows, we had to pay a cruel price for that "moment of truth."

The authorities in power today are profoundly different from those who ruled prior to that recent explosion. Not only because the latter were, so to speak, the "originals" and their successors a mere formalised imitation, incapable of reflecting the extent to which the original had meanwhile lost its mystique, but primarily for another reason. For whereas the earlier version rested on a genuine and not inconsiderable social basis derived from the trustful support accorded, though in declining measure, by one part of the population, and on the equally genuine and considerable attractiveness (which also gradually evaporated) of the social benefits it originally promised, today's régime rests solely on the ruling minority's instinct of self-preservation and on the fear of the ruled majority.

In these circumstances, it is hard to foresee all the feasible scenarios for an eventual future "moment of truth"—to foresee how such a complex and undisguised degradation of the whole of society might one day demand satisfaction. And it is quite impossible to estimate the scope and depth of the tragic consequences such a moment might inflict, perhaps must inflict, on our two nations.

It is startling to consider in this context the inability of a government, which advertises itself as the most scientific on record, to grasp the elementary rules of its own operations, or to learn from its own past.

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I HAVE MADE IT CLEAR that I have no fear of life in Czechoslovakia coming to a halt, or of history being suspended for ever with the accession to power of the present leaders. Every situation is history, and every epoch has been succeeded by a fresh situation and a new epoch; and, for better or worse, the new ones were always quite remote from the expectations of the organisers and rulers of the preceding period.

What I am afraid of is something else. The whole of this letter is concerned, in fact, with what I really fear—the pointlessly harsh and long-lasting consequences which the present violent abuses will have for our nations. I fear the price we are all bound to pay for the drastic suppression of history, the cruel and needless banishment of life into the underground of society and the depths of the human soul, the new compulsory "deferment" of every opportunity for society to live in anything like a natural way. And perhaps it is apparent from what I wrote a little way back that I am not only worried about our current payments in terms of everyday bitterness at the spoliation of society and human degradation, nor about the heavy tax we shall have to pay in the shape of a long-lasting spiritual and moral decline of society. I am also concerned with the scarcely calculable surcharge which may be imposed on us when the moment next arrives for life and history to demand their due.

The degree of responsibility a political leader bears for the condition of his country must always vary and, obviously, can never be absolute. He never rules alone, and so some portion of responsibility rests on those who surround him. No country exists in a vacuum, so its policies are in some ways always influenced by those of other countries. Clearly, the previous rulers always have much to answer for, since it was their policies that predetermined the present situation. The public, too, has much to answer for, both individually, through the daily personal decisions of each responsible human being that went to create the total state of affairs, and collectively, as a socio-historic whole, limited by circumstances and limiting those circumstances in turn.

Despite these qualifications, which naturally apply in our current situation, as in any other, your responsibility as a political leader is still a great one. You help to determine the climate in which we all have to live and can therefore directly influence the final size of the bill our society will be paying for today's process of "consolidation."

THE CZECHS AND SLOVAKS, like other nations, harbour within themselves simultaneously the most disparate potentialities. We have had, we still have, and we will go on having our heroes and, equally, our informers and traitors. We are capable of unleashing our imagination and creativity, of rising spiritually and morally to unexpected heights, of fighting for the truth and sacrificing ourselves for others. But it lies in us equally to succumb to total apathy, to take no interest in anything but our bellies and to spend our time tripping over one another. And though human souls are far from being mere pint-pots into which anything can be poured (note the arrogant implications of that dreadful phrase so frequent in official speeches, when it is complained that "we"—that is, "the government"—find that such and such ideas are "being instilled into people's heads"), nevertheless, it depends very much on the leaders which of these contrary tendencies that slumber in society will be mobilised, which set of potentialities will be given the chance of fulfilment and which will be, on the contrary, suppressed.

So far, it is the worst in us which is being systematically activated and enlarged—egotism, hypocrisy, indifference, cowardice, fear, resignation, and the desire to escape every personal responsibility, regardless of the general consequences.

Yet even today's national leadership has the opportunity to influence society by its policies in such a way as to encourage not the worse side of us, but the better.

SO FAR, YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT have chosen the easy way out for yourselves, and the most dangerous road for society: the path of inner decay for the sake of outward appearances; of deadening life for the sake of increasing uniformity; of deepening the spiritual and moral crisis of our country, and ceaselessly degrading human dignity with the paltry objective of protecting your own power.

Yet, even within the given limitations, you have the chance to do much towards at least relative improvement of the situation. This might be a more strenuous and less gratifying way, whose benefits would not be

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immediately obvious and which would meet with resistance here and there. But in the light of our society's true interests and prospects, this way would be vastly the more meaningful one.

AS A CITIZEN OF THIS COUNTRY, I hereby request, openly and publicly, that you and the leading representatives of the present régime consider, with all seriousness, the matters I have tried to draw to your attention, assess in their light the degree of your historic responsibility, and act accordingly.

Vaclav Havel,

Writer

8.4.1975

Archaeology

No one would know you had lived
but for my discovery
of the anonymous undulation
of your grave like the early swelling
of the belly of a woman
who is with child. And if I entered
it now, I would find your bones
huddled together, but without
flesh; their ruined architecture
a reproach, the skull luminous
but not with thought.
Would it help us to learn
what you were called in your forgotten
language? Are not our jaws
frail for the sustaining of the consonants'
weight? Yet they were balanced
on tongues like ours, echoed
in the ears' passages, in intervals when
the volcano was silent. How
tenderly did the woman handle
them, as she leaned her haired body
to yours? Where are the instruments
of your music, the pipe of hazel, the
bull's horn, the interpreters
of your loneliness on this
ferocious planet?
We are domesticating
it slowly, but at times it rises
against us, so that we see again
the primaeval shadows you built
your fire among. We are cleverer
than you; our nightmares
are intellectual; but we never awaken
from the compulsiveness of the mind's
stare into the lenses' furious interiors.

R. S. Thomas

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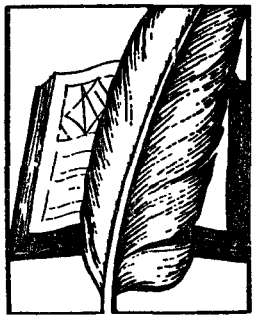

Column

I WONDER if anyone would easily guess the subject of the following quotation from the syndicated American column by Mr Joseph Kraft (printed in a recent issue of the *International Herald Tribune*): "He hails from a culture considered backward by American standards and knows nothing of the relations between nations."

I offer no prize for the correct solution, which is Alexander Solzhenitsyn, whom Mr Kraft also describes as "a great literary artist, with a supreme feel for human suffering." One may well ask how it is that a "backward" culture is capable of producing "a great literary artist", because after all that capacity is normally among the standards by which we judge whether a culture is backward or not. Great literary artists do not grow on gooseberry bushes; they are an integral part of the culture which produces them and help to determine its quality, and no one is more conscious of this than Solzhenitsyn himself.

But this is a puzzle which has long been familiar to anyone who takes any interest in the strange contradictions of Russian history. What one should perhaps say is that the culture which Solzhenitsyn "hails from" is Russian culture not Soviet culture. I do not know if Mr Kraft would admit this distinction, or whether, if he did, he would still claim that "considered by American standards", Russian culture is backward. If he did, I think he might provoke many people, and not only Russians, to say: so much the worse for American standards. I have no doubt that by these standards the culture of Viet Nam, or of Indo-China as a whole, is a backward one; otherwise it would not have come so easily to Americans to think of the people of Viet Nam, whether of the North or the South, as gooks. I think that Mr Kraft, and perhaps Americans as a whole, should think again when they talk of backward cultures; it might save them from many avoidable mistakes.

One might also ask whether "a supreme feel for human suffering" isn't precisely what is most wanted at the present time if one wishes to achieve an understanding of the relations between nations, of which, during my lifetime, human suffering has been the most characteristic product. I do not know from what sources Mr Kraft gets his knowledge of international relations; I imagine that they are those more or less available to all of us. But I have a feeling that Solzhenitsyn's experiences in "The Patriotic War", together with his travels in the "Gulag Archipelago", which is a kind of pressure-cooker for all the varied peoples and races of the U.S.S.R., not to speak of other countries, has given him a rather more specialised insight into "the relations between nations" as they actually exist over a large area of the globe, more especially from the point of view of people who are, as it were, on the receiving end of them.

SUCH EXPERIENCES might have a certain value to the United States at the present time. What worries many people about the foreign policy of the United States, which is aimed at a *détente* and a relaxation of tension with the Soviet Union, is that its only practical result may be to strengthen, stabilise and perpetuate a system in which the individual human being counts for nothing; there is a danger that under certain circumstances diplomacy may become (as Nicholas Bethall has recently reminded us) an art performed like surgery without anaesthetics on the screaming bodies of the living. Among the many exceptional gifts which Dr Kissinger brings to the practice of diplomacy, a "supreme feel for human suffering" is not the most notable; things might be better if it was.

THE OCCASION which inspired Mr Kraft's dismissive comments on Solzhenitsyn as a student of foreign affairs was the dinner recently given in his honour by the American trade unions, and the long extempore speech which he delivered to the assembled guests, including Mr James Schlesinger, now reported to be occupied in organising a new and more sophisticated system of air-raid shelters, in which Americans (some of them) may hope to lead a troglodytic existence underground if the surface of the United States should be made uninhabitable by Soviet missiles.

I must confess that I envy the United States their trade unions; I'd rather have them than Mr Kraft. The invitations to the guests stated that the dinner had been organised to honour Solzhenitsyn as a fighter for human freedom, and that it was for this purpose that their presence was requested. How different from our own trade unions! When the AFL-CIO wishes to honour a foreign visitor they choose the writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn; when the T.U.C. does, it invites the ex-KGB chief Alexander Shelepin.

Nothing perhaps could better illustrate the difference in the roles played by American and British trade unionism at the present time, both on the national and the international scene. On the one side, there is a clear and deep-seated conviction that there can only be a future for trade unionism within a system in which the worker is

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genuinely free to defend and advance his own interests, and that therefore the defence of such a system is one of the fundamental objectives of the trade union movement; American trade unionists evidently mean it when they sing *The Union Makes You Free*!

On the other side, there is a confused belief that trade unionism can survive even if democracy goes by the board, that trade unionists could be free even if everyone else were slaves, and that somehow the cause of trade unionism could be advanced even at the expense of the only system which legally and constitutionally guarantees its continued existence. I do not say (because it would be manifestly untrue) that all, or even most, trade unionists in Britain share this belief. But there are some who do; there are others who half-heartedly yield to it; there are many who, without believing in it, go along with it, simply because today they have no leaders who can make the fundamental issue clear to them; and there are a few who quite consciously exploit this confusion of mind because they see in it a means to an end, which is to subvert the society on which trade unionism itself depends for its existence. Caught in the almost metaphysical distinctions between such delicately shaded varieties of feeling and opinion, British trade unionists have lost the clear-sightedness of their American brothers; only so it can be explained how, when they wish to welcome a fraternal delegate, they find themselves landed with comrade Shelepin.

★

YET, EVEN GRANTED the contrast between the AFL-CIO and the T.U.C., perhaps even American trade unionists may have felt that they had been given rather more than they bargained for in the speech which Solzhenitsyn delivered at the dinner held in his honour. For it was nothing less than a total condemnation of American foreign policy over a period of nearly 50 years, based upon the proposition that any form of compromise with Communism represents a surrender to the powers of evil, of which one can only expect that, very soon, the Devil will claim his own. From this point of view, even those phases of American policy which once recommended themselves to most men of good will and good faith appear as both a crime and a blunder. Solzhenitsyn denounced the American recognition of the Soviet Union in 1933; the War-time alliance against National-Socialist Germany; the Viet Nam truce of 1973, which prepared the way for America's eventual withdrawal. It goes without saying that the present policy of *détente* met with his unqualified contempt, because it at once strengthens the Soviet Union and weakens the United States, the Western world, and whatever forms of resistance still exist within the Soviet Union itself.

In Solzhenitsyn's eyes, such things are simply successive incidents in the record of continous defeat which constitutes the history of America's relations with the Soviet Union; he has given expression to the same point of view in an article printed in the *New York Times*, the Paris *Herald Tribune* and other newspapers. Here he states it in the novel form that, whereas since World War II everyone has been obsessed with the question of how to avoid World War III, what has actually happened is that World War III has already been fought and lost without anyone noticing.

> "There is no longer any point in asking how to prevent the Third World War. We must have the courage and lucidity to stop the Fourth. Stop it we must; not fall on our knees as it approaches."

Solzhenitsyn traces step by step the process by which, in his view, the defeat of the West was accomplished.

> "World War III began immediately after World War II; the seeds were planted as that war ended, and it first saw the light of day at Yalta in 1945, as the cowardly pens of Roosevelt and Churchill, anxious to celebrate their victory with a litany of concessions, signed away Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia, Mongolia, condemned to death or to concentration camps millions of Soviet citizens, created an ineffectual United Nations Assembly, and finally abandoned Yugoslavia, Albania, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany."

Nor are these the only losses, actual or impending.

> "The powerful Western countries that emerged victorious from the first two World Wars have been intent on courting weakness during these thirty years of peace, squandering real or potential allies, ruining their credibility, abandoning territory and populations to an implacable enemy; immense populous China, their most important ally in World War II, North Korea, Cuba, North Viet Nam and now South Viet Nam and Cambodia; Laos is about to go; Thailand, South Korea and Israel are threatened; Portugal is leaping into the same abyss. Finland and Austria await their fate with resignation, impotent to defend themselves, and clearly with no reason to expect assistance from abroad."

He concludes this formidable indictment with the words:

> "Of course, no one has the right to demand that the West undertakes the defence of Malaysia, Indonesia, Formosa or the Philippines; no one can dare blame it for not wanting to do so. But those young men who refused to bear the pain and anguish of the far-away war in Viet Nam will not have passed the age of military service before they—not their sons—must fall in defence of America. But by then it will be too late."

AMONG THE MANY COMMENTATORS who have disputed Solzhenitsyn's thesis that World War III

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is already over and lost is M. Raymond Aron, writing in *Le Figaro*. In fact, says M. Aron, there has been no world war since 1945 between the East and the West. What there has been is a protracted conflict, which has expressed itself in terms both of material strength and of ideas. Nor, in this conflict, have all the losses been on the side of the West or the gains on the side of the East, even though the West may be well advised to look at its present situation with a certain alarm. In particular, the end of colonialism in Asia and Africa does not, as Solzhenitsyn believes, necessarily weaken the West; rather, it has liberated the West from a burden of insoluble contradictions which had become an intolerable liability, whether considered in terms of material strength or of ideological credibility. The end of two great civil wars in Asia, both of which originated well before World War II, has, so far as one can see, neither added to the strength of the East nor detracted from that of the West; rather, it has increased the dangers to which the Soviet Union itself is exposed, and of this it has shown itself acutely conscious, more especially in its enduring conflict with the People's Republic of China.

Where the balance has tipped decisively to the disadvantage of the West has been in Europe, where the loss of historic provinces which were once an integral part of her civilisation has weakened her irredeemably. Even here, however, history has not worked entirely to the advantage of the Soviet Union, for the means and the methods by which she has imposed and maintained her domination over hitherto free and independent nations have been such as to destroy almost totally the credibility of her claim to represent the cause of the oppressed peoples of the earth.

Professor Aron is right, I think, to say that a global review of profit and loss would not show the kind of decisive balance in favour of the Soviet Union from which Solzhenitsyn draws such pessimistic and apocalyptic assertions. Yet this in no way refutes his assertions that the changes which have taken place since World War II have involved, and continue to involve, an appalling cost in human misery; and that this cost has been paid by the victims of Soviet brutality, both within the Soviet Union and in the unfortunate countries which have fallen beneath her domination. In Solzhenitsyn's eyes, the West has bought peace at the expense of the suffering of millions of victims, and a peace bought at such a price is morally unjustifiable and will in the end involve its own punishment in the form of a loss of nerve which will paralyse any effort by the West to defend itself against its "implacable enemy."

SUCH A VIEW of international relations is a highly unfashionable one today, especially in the United States, where Dr Kissinger has made *Realpolitik* all the rage, even if it has lost something of its bloom recently. It is sometimes forgotten, however, that *Realpolitik* requires nerve and will no less than a policy dictated by "a supreme feel for human suffering"—perhaps even more, because *Realpolitik* is always at the mercy of events, while morality is to a certain extent self-sustaining in the sense that clear principles consistently applied provide as good a guide to action as we are likely to find in a highly imperfect world.

It is Solzhenitsyn's contention that the West, as the result of a long series of compromises and concessions, of flirting with forms of *Realpolitik* which it is very imperfectly adapted to apply consistently, of betraying the moral principles which in a democracy form the only firm basis for policy, has lost the will and capacity for effective action. He presents this thesis in the form of an historical analysis with which one may well quarrel both in general and in detail, while at the same time accepting that fundamentally he is right. For it is not really a political, but an ethical and a psychological truth which he wishes to impress on us; and that truth is, essentially, that in the realm of freedom, to which the West aspires, however imperfectly it embodies it, morality and action are inseparable. It is only in the realm of determinism that they can be distinguished, but that is only because there they have both lost their meaning. *R*

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Types of Mind

By F. A. Hayek

ACCIDENT had early drawn my attention to the contrast between two types of scientific thinking which I have since again and again been watching with growing fascination. I have long wished to describe the difference but have been deterred by the egotistic character such an account is bound to assume. My interest in it is largely due to the fact that I myself represent a rather extreme instance of the more unconventional type, and that to describe it inevitably means largely talking about myself and must appear like an apology for not conforming to a recognised standard. I have now come to the conclusion, however, that the recognition of the contribution students of this type can make may have important consequences for policy in higher education, and that for this reason such an account may serve a useful purpose.

THERE EXISTS A STEREOTYPE of the great scientist which, though overdrawn, is not entirely wrong. He is seen, above all, as the perfect master of his subject, the man who has at his ready command the whole theory and all the important facts of his discipline and is prepared to answer at a moment's notice all important questions relating to his field. Even if such paragons do not really exist, I have certainly encountered scientists who closely approach this ideal. And many more, I believe, feel that this is the standard at which they ought to aim, and often suffer from a feeling of inadequacy because they fail to satisfy it. It is also the type we learn to admire because we can watch him in operation. Most of the brilliant expositors, the most successful teachers, writers and speakers on science, the sparkling conversationalists belong to this class. Their lucid accounts spring from a complete conspectus of the whole of their subject which comprehends not only their own conceptions but equally the theories of others, past and present. No doubt these recognised masters of the existing state of knowledge include also some of the most creative minds, but what I am not certain is whether this particular capacity really helps creativity.

Some of my closest colleagues and best friends have belonged to this type and owe their well deserved reputations to accomplishments I could never try to emulate. In almost any question about the state of our science I regard them as more competent to provide information than a person of my own sort. They certainly can give a more intelligible account of the subject to an outsider or young student than I could, and are of much greater help to the future practitioner. What I am going to plead is that there is a case in the various institutions for a few specimens of minds of a different type.

IN MY PRIVATE LANGUAGE I used to describe the recognised standard type of scientists as the memory type. But this is somewhat unfair because their ability is due to a particular kind of memory, and there are also other kinds. I shall therefore here call this type simply the "master of his subject." It is the kind of mind who can retain the particular things he has read or heard, often the particular words in which an

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idea has been expressed, and retain them for a long time. This capacity one may lack, though one may possess a very good short-term memory even for isolated facts, as I know from my own experience, at least when I was a very young man. I owe it largely to the capacity to swot up in a few weeks before the end-of-the-year examinations the whole substance of a year's teaching in several subjects in which I had done no work whatever that I managed to complete a school education which gave me access to a university. But I forgot such knowledge as rapidly as I had acquired it; and I always lacked the capacity to retain, for any length of time, the successive steps of a complex argument, or to store in my mind useful information which I could not place into a framework of ideas with which I was familiar.

WHAT PRESERVED ME from developing an acute feeling of inferiority in the company of those more efficient scholars was that I knew that I owed whatever worth-while new ideas I ever had to *not* possessing their capacity, *i.e.* to often *not* being able to remember what every competent specialist is supposed to have at his fingertips. Whenever I saw a new light on something it was as the result of a painful effort to reconstruct an argument which most competent economists would effortlessly and instantly reproduce.

What, then, does my knowledge consist of on which I base my claim to be a trained economist? Certainly not in the distinct recollection of particular statements or arguments. I generally will not be able to reproduce the contents of a book I have read or a lecture I have heard on my subject,[1] but I have certainly often greatly profited from such books or lectures, of the contents of which I could not possibly give an account even immediately after I had read or heard them. In fact the attempt to remember what the writer or speaker said would have deprived me of most of the benefit of the exposition, at least so far as it was on a topic on which I had already formed opinions. Even as a student I soon gave up all attempts to take notes of lectures—as soon as I tried I ceased to understand. My gain from hearing or reading what other people thought was that it changed, as it were, the colours of my own concepts. What I heard or read did not enable me to reproduce their thought but altered my thought. I would not retain their ideas or concepts but modify the relations between my own.

The result of this manner of absorbing ideas is best described by comparing it to the somewhat blurred outlines of a composite photograph: that is, the results of superimposing prints of different faces which at one time was popular as a means of bringing out the common features of a type or a race. There is nothing very precise about such a picture of the world. But it provides a map or a framework in which one has to discover one's path rather than being able to follow a rigidly defined established one. What my sources give me are not definite pieces of knowledge which I can put together, but some modification of an already existing structure inside which I have to find a way by observing all sorts of warning posts.

I BELIEVE IT WAS A. N. Whitehead who once suggested that new ideas are born out of a state of confusion. That is certainly my experience. It was because I did not remember the answers that to others may have been obvious that I was often forced to think out a solution to a problem which did not exist for those who had a more orderly mind. That the existence of this sort of knowledge is not wholly unfamiliar is shown by the only half-joking description of an educated person as one who has forgotten a great deal. Such submerged memories may be quite important guides of judgment.

I am inclined to call minds of this type the "puzzlers." But I shall not mind if they are called the muddlers, since they certainly will often give this impression if they talk about a subject before they have painfully worked through to some degree of clarity.

Their constant difficulties, which in rare instances may be rewarded by a new insight, are due to the fact that they cannot avail themselves of the established verbal formulae or arguments which lead others smoothly and quickly to the result. But being forced to find their own way of expressing an accepted idea, they sometimes discover that the conventional formula conceals gaps or unjustified tacit presuppositions. They will be forced explicitly to answer questions which had been long effectively avoided by a plausible but ambiguous turn of phrase or an implicit but illegitimate assumption.

People whose minds work that way seem clearly to rely in some measure on a process of wordless

[1] This may sound a curious confession from a university teacher who for some forty years regularly lectured on the history of economic thought and enjoyed so doing. I was indeed always greatly interested in the works of earlier students, and learnt a great deal from them. And somehow I enjoyed reconstructing their lives and personalities, although I had no illusions that this in any way explained their scientific beliefs. I believe I also gave in my lectures a fairly adequate picture of their influence on the development of economics by discussing their effect on others. But what I told my students was essentially what I had learnt from those writers and not what they chiefly thought, which may have been something quite different.

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thought, something the existence of which is occasionally denied but which at least bilingual persons seem to me often to possess. To "see" certain connections distinctly does not yet mean for them that they know how to describe them in words. Even after long endeavour to find the right form of words they may still be acutely aware that the expression adopted does not fully convey what they really mean. They also show another somewhat curious feature which I believe is not rare but which I have never seen described: that many of their particular ideas in different fields may spring from some single more general conception of which they are themselves not aware but which, like the similarity of their approach to the separate issues, they may much later discover with surprise,

IF THERE REALLY ARE two such different types of mind who both have their contributions to make to the growth of knowledge, it may well mean that our present system of selecting those to be admitted to the universities may exclude some who might make great contributions. There are of course also other reasons which make one feel doubtful about the principle that all those, and only those, who can pass certain examinations should have a claim to a university education. The number of great scientists who were bad pupils at school and might not have passed such a test is large—and the proportion of the children who were at school very good at all subjects and later became intellectually eminent comparatively small. It seems to me also clear that the application of the now accepted principle is, in fact, lowering the proportion of the students who study because of a passionate interest in their subject.

At any rate, while I have serious doubts whether we ought to increase further the number of those who acquire a claim to a university education by passing certain examinations, I feel strongly that there ought to be a second way where the intensity of the desire for the acquisition of scientific knowledge counts decisively. This means that it should be possible to acquire this right by some sacrifice of one's own. I readily admit that there is little relation between the strength of this wish and the capacity to pay for its satisfaction. Nor is the possibility of financing the study by current earnings from other work an adequate solution—certainly not in the demanding experimental subjects. In professional schools like law or medicine, loans to be repaid from later earnings may solve the financial problem. Yet this hardly helps in the selection of those to be enabled to devote themselves to theoretical work.

There are sacrifices, however, which are in everybody's power and which might be deemed to give a claim to the opportunity to devote oneself for a time wholly to the study of a chosen subject. If this privilege could be earned by pledging oneself for a number of years to an austere life of semi-monastic character, denying oneself many of the pleasures and amusements which at our present level of wealth youth often takes for granted, it would truly be by an effort of one's own and not by somebody else's judgment of his capacity that the passionate interest in a subject would come to count; a chance would thus be given to those whose talent will show itself only once they can immerse themselves in their special subject.

What I envisage is an arrangement by which those who chose this course would have such essentials as housing, simple food, and an ample credit for books and the like provided for them, but would have to pledge themselves to live beyond this on a very restricted budget. It seems to me that the readiness to give up for a few years some of the usual pleasures of the young is a better indication of the probability of an individual profiting from a higher education than the success in examinations in a variety of school subjects. I should also not be surprised if those who earned their right to study by such a personal sacrifice would be more respected by their fellows than those who had acquired it by passing exams. It is probably still true and recognised that most great achievements as well as high esteem are due to a self-discipline which puts a single-minded pursuit of a self-chosen goal above most other pleasures—a sacrifice of many other human values which many of the great scientists had to make at the most productive stage of their careers.

To be sure, even with such a system admission would require some proof of competence in the chosen field and recurrent evidence of progress in the course of the study. I would also hold up to those who, for some four years or so, stand the course with faithful observance of the special discipline, and who then show great ability, the prospect of an ample graduate scholarship with complete freedom. Even if a large proportion of those who started on this scheme fell by the wayside and either did not complete the course or showed no more than average performance, I believe such an institution would enable us to find and develop talents which without it may be lost. Indeed, it seems to me that the type that would be attracted thereby should constitute an important ingredient of any scholarly community—and a safeguard against the good examinees establishing a reign of sacred formulae under which all minds move in the accustomed grooves.

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Ted Hughes

Moon-bells

The savage tribes that have their lairs
In the Moon's extinct craters
Pray to the earth with savage prayers:
"O Thou who didst create us

Speak to us through our Holy Bells.
O with thy wisdom guide us.
Correct with bong of decibels
The lunatic inside us."

So then they swing the bells they have slung
In each volcano's womb,
And earth begins to declare with clung
And clang and mumbling boom

Out of one bell: "Towers fall
And dunghills rise." And from another:
"He who thinks he knows it all
Marries his own mother."

"Only an owl knows the worth of an owl,"
Clanks one with a clunk.
"Let every man," groans one in toil,
"Skin his own skunk."

"The head is older than the book,"
Shrills one with sour tone,
And "Beauty is only skin deep
But ugly goes to the bone."

Then: "He who does not swell in the warm
Will not shrink in the cold."
Another is muttering: "Hair by hair
You may pluck a tiger bald."

"Going to ruin is silent work,"
One dins with numbing bellow.
And: "Love and Thirst, they know no shame,
But the Itch beats them hollow."

"All things, save love and music,
Shall perish," another cries.
"Downcast is King of illness."
"Dead fathers have huge eyes."

So on and on the bells declare
The Word of Earth to them up there.

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Peter Porter

Dichtung und Wahrheit

What we are here for is to hear
The Golden Boy of Poetry declare
That, like himself, the poem is not there,
Not really there—existence, fear
And poetry are not real, but we
May admire his not being here openly.

Which is no news to the Marxists
Holding babies in the aisle—
They never raise their voices, never smile—
They know the missing world exists
And must be licensed until dead
By some phrases which they carry in their heads.

At which an old boring leonine drag
Takes the stand and kills liberty
By praising it in torrid cliché:
He is the editor of a poetry mag
Which has opened the doors of the mind
To beauty, since the blind first led the blind

Then a Libber in white trouser suit
Rises and recalls that Golden Boy
Had said that poetry was a solo joy
Like masturbating, and who can refute
That all women are rejected sooner or later,
She being married to a chronic masturbator?

The noise in the hall has grown so loud
Even the blue-rinsed ladies are aglow—
A bum goes through a side window,
The Love Feast turns into a howling crowd:
Sex, Politics and Religion, these three
Abide, and the vector of them is Poetry.

The Chairman vainly calls for order
Till his eye lights on a silent man
Clutching a manilla folder—"Professor Chan
Being with us today will afford a
Parametric view", and so gives up the stand
To a History of Poetry in Thailand.

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RADIO

Samuel Beckett & the Art of Broadcasting

By Martin Esslin

SAMUEL BECKETT'S work for broadcasting—four radio plays and one television play—is a highly significant part of his *oeuvre* and far less fully discussed in the mounting literature on Beckett than his other output, far less readily available also in performance which alone can bring out its full flavour. But beyond that, Beckett's experience with broadcasting, and above all radio, has played a significant and little-known part in his development as an artist.

It has become a kind of cliché of the Beckett literature that the BBC commissioned radio plays from Beckett. Even the cover of the first American publication of *All That Fall* and *Embers* in the Grove Press paperback *Krapp's Last Tape and Other Dramatic Pieces* (1960) baldly states: "two radio plays commissioned by the BBC's Third Programme." Beckett himself has always strenuously denied that he writes plays on commission from anyone. And the truth is that he was indeed never commissioned to write anything by the BBC. The real story of the genesis of these radio plays is far more complex and more interesting.

THE FIRST COMMUNICATION between Beckett and the BBC goes back to the period before his rise to fame as the author of *Waiting for Godot*. On 1 June 1952 Beckett sent P. H. Newby (then a talks producer, later to become Controller of the Third Programme, and later still Director of Programmes for Radio) the text of *Cascando*. The brief note from Beckett stands forlorn and unexplained in the file. Clearly this was not the radio play of that title, but the poem. Mr Newby assumes that he had heard about Beckett's poetry from someone familiar with the Paris scene—possibly Christopher Logue—and asked him to send some of his poetry. Nothing seems to have come of this first contact.

After the success of *Waiting for Godot* enquiries were made about the play early in 1953 and indeed steps were taken to secure the rights to translate the play. On 6 August 1953 the BBC was informed that the author insisted on making his own translation. When a copy of this arrived, the producer who had been enthusiastic about the Paris production (let him remain mercifully nameless) found the translation not as good as the original. He felt that perhaps it might be made workable if the author was willing to allow improvements to be written into it. But alas, he added in a final memorandum (dated 24 May 1954), Beckett's Paris publisher had assured him that the author was *"un sauvage"* and quite unwilling to listen to reason. Nevertheless, after the success of the London performance, another producer, Raymond Raikes, warmly urged that it should be preserved for posterity by being recorded and broadcast. By 6 December 1955 the rights to broadcast the performance had been obtained, though for some reason, now impossible to ascertain, nothing came of the project.

THROUGH ALL THIS ARGUMENT and agitation Beckett's name had become familiar within the Drama Department and the Third Programme team, and John Morris (then Controller of the Third Programme) was very eager to broadcast something by him. In June 1956 he heard rumours of a new play, to be performed in Marseilles, and asked the Paris representative of the BBC, Cecilia Reeves, to make inquiries. She wrote to Morris on 21 June 1956:

> "I have written to Beckett asking if he would write a piece for Third and if he would let us have the text of *La Fin du Jeu* [*sic*—either that was the title at that stage or Miss Reeves had misremembered it]. He is, as you know, an elusive character and spending much of his time outside Paris and our mutual contact Desmond Ryan has already gone South. He has however reacted amiably to the suggestion that his mime piece *Soif* [clearly the original title of *Acte Sans Paroles I*], also to be given at Marseilles, should be considered for television, so I imagine that his former, rather hostile, attitude to radio in general is improving."

The Head of Television Drama, Michael Barry, must have met Beckett in Paris shortly afterwards to discuss the television broadcast of the mime

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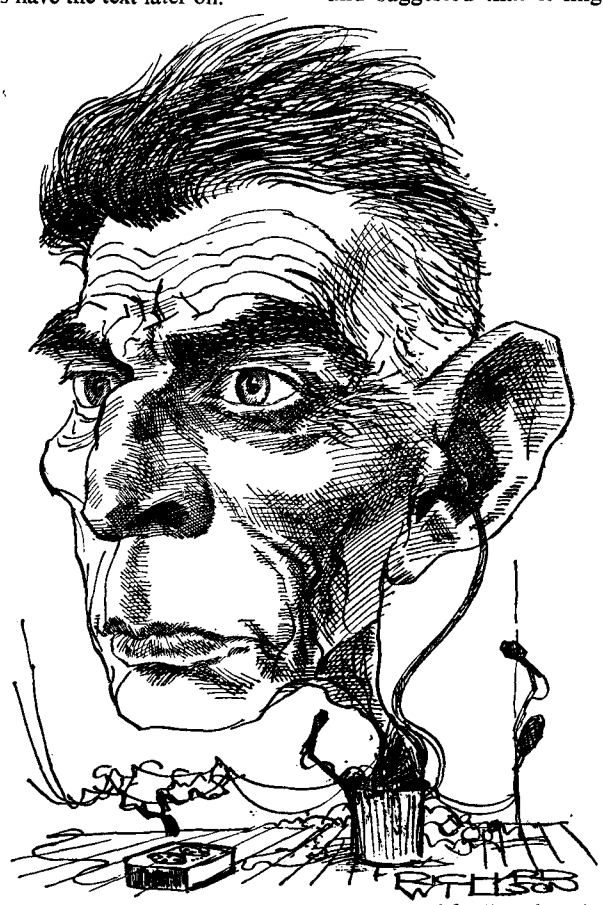
play. For on 4 July 1956, Cecilia Reeves' assistant wrote to the Head of Radio Drama:

> "This is just to confirm what Mr Barry has already told you that Beckett is agreeable, in principle, to writing a radio play for Third and that he will discuss the idea in more detail with Miss Reeves when she comes back. He says, however, that he has never written anything for radio before and will probably need a little persuasion from Miss Reeves before he actually starts working on it. As regards the play which is to be produced at Marseilles next month, Beckett has not yet finished writing it and is not yet sure about its title which is at present *Fin de Partie*. He will certainly let us have the text later on."

On the same day Beckett wrote to Miss Reeves, who was on leave in England, that he had had an idea which might or might not lead to something. Within a week John Morris wrote to Beckett to tell him how excited he was to hear of this, and suggested that he might meet him for lunch in Paris to discuss this and other ideas. The lunch duly took place on 18 July 1956, and John Morris wrote on the same day to the Head of Drama, Val Gielgud:

> "... I saw Samuel Beckett in Paris this morning. He is extremely keen to write an original work for the Third Programme and has, indeed, already done the first few pages of it. I got the impression that he has a very sound idea of the problems of writing for radio and I expect something pretty good. He says his output is unpredictable. Sometimes he works slowly, at others very fast, but he does not wish to be tied down to any definite date.... The play which was to have been done at the Marseilles festival has now been cancelled because of some sort of muddle with the organisers.... He has promised the Third Programme the first chance to do an English translation as soon as the French stage production is fixed up."



BECKETT SENT John Morris the finished manuscript of *All That Fall* on 27 September 1956. So only just over two-and-a-half months had elapsed between the date at which Beckett first mentioned the idea and the actual completion of the play. In a brief note accompanying the manuscript Beckett stated that the play might well call for a special quality of *bruitage* and that if necessary he would let him have further details. Morris expressed his delight with the play and asked for a note on the special *bruitage*. On 18 October Beckett replied that he found it difficult to put his ideas about the sound effects on paper, and suggested that it might be best for him to meet the *bruiteur*. By return of post, on the following day, Morris responded with the news that "Donald McWhinnie who will be producing *All That Fall* is going to be in Paris for a week from Monday next, 22nd October. I think it would be very useful for you to meet him since I know he would like to discuss with you personally a number of production points...." And so started the immensely fruitful relationship between Donald McWhinnie (then Assistant Head of the radio drama department, and one of the great pioneers of the art of radio) and Samuel Beckett.

The play was scheduled for the third week in January 1957. Donald McWhinnie, having discussed the production with Beckett and finding that their ideas closely agreed, got down to work. On 28 November Beckett wrote supplying the only amendment: in the very first line of dialogue he changed the phrase which originally ran "All alone in that old crazy house" to "all alone in that ruinous old house." He later informed McWhinnie that the opening of *Fin de Partie* was now planned for 15 January at the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre, and that he would therefore be unable to attend the rehearsals and recording of *All That Fall* in London between 2 and 6 January.

In his reply (13 December 1956) McWhinnie

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expressed his regret at this decision and informed Beckett that he had decided to have all the animal noises in the script recorded by humans. He also asked for a short contribution (from 5 to 500 words) for the BBC's programme periodical, *Radio Times*. Beckett politely declined on his customary ground that he was incapable of writing about his own work. Nor could he see the point of having the animal noises imitated by humans. The opening of his play at the Oeuvre having been postponed, he had thought of coming to London for the production. But he had decided against it because he felt that he might be a hindrance rather than a help in the studio.

McWhinnie wrote to explain his ideas about the animal noises:

> ". . . I am sorry to disturb you about the animals. Of course we have realistic recordings, but the difficulty is that it is almost impossible to obtain the right sort of timing and balance with realistic effects. By using good mimics I think we can get real style and shape into the thing. The other factor is that existing recordings are very familiar to our listeners and I do feel that without being extreme we need, in this particular case, to get away from standard realism. As far as we have got, I am very pleased with the results of this experiment; but, of course, if it should not prove right, when we have put the whole thing together, we shall have to think again. . . ."

This was on the eve of the start of rehearsals with the actors. The experiments with sound effects had been going on for some time, mainly late into the evening in drama studios vacated by their daytime users. The sound technician principally involved was Desmond Briscoe, a radio enthusiast of immense inventiveness and imagination. Beckett's script demanded a degree of stylised realism hitherto unheard of in radio drama, and new methods had to be found to extract the various sounds needed (both animal and mechanical—footsteps, cars, bicycle wheels, the train, the cart) from the simple naturalism of the hundreds of records in the BBC's effects library. Briscoe (and his gramophone operator, Norman Baines) had to invent ways and means to remove these sounds from the purely realistic sphere. They did so by treating them electronically: slowing down, speeding up, adding echo, fragmenting them by cutting them into segments, and putting them together in new ways. These experiments, and the discoveries made as they evolved, directly led to the establishment of the BBC's Radiophonic Workshop. Beckett and *All That Fall* thus directly contributed to one of the most important technical advances in the art of radio (and the technique, and indeed technology, of radio in Britain).

THE FIRST BROADCAST of *All That Fall* took place on 13 January 1957. In a letter dated 14 December 1956 (although it was clearly written on 14 January 1957, the day after the broadcast) Beckett sent McWhinnie a hearty *"bien travaillé."* The reception of the BBC's Third Programme wavelength in France had been very poor, but he had heard enough to realise that the two principals, Mary O'Farrell and J. G. Devlin, had given excellent performances, although the latter had sounded somewhat perfunctory at times. He had greatly liked the laughter with which they greeted the text of the sermon (the line from the Psalms which gives the play its title). But he still had not thought the animal noises quite right.

Donald McWhinnie has supplied a very convincing justification for the solution of the problem of the animal noises in his excellent and detailed account of the production process of *All That Fall* in his book *The Art of Radio* (pp. 133–151). Recordings of actual animal sounds could never have been blended into the stylised convention of the play. The atmosphere and acoustics of the circumstances under which they were made inevitably cling to such recordings, and would have punctured the enclosed, subjective universe of *All That Fall.*

Yet it is remarkable to what extent Beckett had, in his first attempt at a radio play, intuitively grasped the specific qualities and capabilities of the medium, and how brilliantly he had seized those aspects of radio which were most germane to his own thematic and formal preoccupations.

THEMATICALLY *All That Fall* clearly links up with Beckett's last previous work in English, *Watt*. The cast of seedy genteel Irish types, the provincial milieu, even the railway station clearly belong to the same world. But whereas *Watt* is still narrated in a clinically cool objective manner, the action of *All That Fall* is experienced by the listener subjectively from Maddy Rooney's point of view. It is precisely the nature of the radio medium which makes possible the fusion of an external dramatic action (as distinct from the wholly internalised monologues of the narrative trilogy which followed *Watt*) with its refraction and distortion in the mirror of a wholly subjective experience. In radio the dramatic action is directly placed in the listener's mind and imagination. The microphone becomes the listener's own ears. And these ears can be directed either to the outside world, or inwards to pick up an internal monologue; indeed, they can enable the listener to experience the external world *subjectively* with the ears of the character in the play.

Through the use of acoustic perspectives the radio writer and director can clearly convey to the listener with *whose* ears, from which sub-

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jective viewpoint, he is witnessing the action, and indeed inside whose mind he is supposed to be. Thus, by the use of stylised and distorted sounds, radio can create a subjective reality halfway between the objective events experienced and their subjective reflection within the mind of the character who experiences them—halfway between waking consciousness and dreamlike states, halfway between fact and fantasy, even hallucination. Just as the subject experiencing such states finds it difficult to decide whether his experience is reality or fantasy, so the radio dramatist can keep the listener in a similar state of uncertainty. In *All That Fall* Maddy Rooney's progress towards Boghill Station has a nightmare quality; it might indeed be a bad dream. Eventually, by various subtle means, the author establishes that we are in the mind of a character to whom objective reality itself is a kind of perpetual nightmare.

Only radio among all dramatic media can create this kind of effect, this peculiar kind of dramatic suspense. Unlike a visual medium, which supplies a multitude of descriptive elements in each instantaneous picture, radio—like music—exists in the temporal dimension alone and must build its picture in a linear manner, adding one descriptive element after another. Information gradually emerges, can be withheld and then dramatically revealed.

Almost as a centrepiece to the nightmarish sequences of *All That Fall* we are made aware of the objective reality of the place we are in, and indeed made to see it objectively, albeit through Maddy Rooney's eyes:

> "... the hills, the plain, the racecourse with its miles and miles of white rails and three red stands, the pretty little wayside station, even you yourselves, yes, I mean it, and over all the clouding blue, I see it all, I stand here and see it all with eyes ... through eyes ... oh, if you had my eyes ... you would understand. ..."

For, far from being a blind medium, radio (*pace* Marshall McLuhan) is an intensely visual medium. The nature of man's consciousness and sensory apparatus is predominantly visual, and inevitably compels him to think and imagine in visual images. Information which reaches him through other senses is instantly converted into visual terms. And aural experiences, which include the immense richness of language as well as musical and natural sound, are the most effective means of triggering visual images. These images, moreover, being generated by each individual listener, have the advantage of being completely satisfying to him. There is no danger that the image seen will fall short of what he may have expected—as it often does in the theatre or on the screen.

ANOTHER ASPECT of the sound medium grasped by Beckett was its need for strict formal patterning. Because they are totally immaterial, aural art forms are in danger of becoming amorphous, formless, and demand great clarity of structure and pattern. Rhythm and rhyme, strophic forms, the patterning of music in movements, all these are devices designed to impose form on the formless. Not only is *All That Fall* very clearly a three-movement structure (Maddy Rooney's anabasis, her wait at the station, her and Dan's katabasis), but it has also a very complex pattern of small-scale rhythms—the footsteps of the anabasis, the doubled footsteps and the thumping of Dan's stick in the katabasis, the rhythmic panting, etc. (That rhythmic and recurrent panting also became a feature of Beckett's *Comment c'est*.) *All That Fall* was acclaimed as a radio masterpiece; it received an enormous amount of critical attention and has established itself as one of the classics of radio drama. The original production was repeated three times in the course of 1957, and again in 1959, 1961, 1966 and 1970. A new production in stereo (again by Donald McWhinnie) was broadcast on 4 June 1972, in the course of the celebrations of the BBC's 50th anniversary (and repeated on 2 December 1972). The play has been translated and broadcast in many languages. It was filmed for television in France, but Beckett is supposed to have disliked the transfer of the play to another medium. When Laurence Olivier and Kenneth Tynan attempted to persuade him to allow them to mount a stage production in the British National Theatre, Beckett refused.

THE TREMENDOUS SUCCESS of *All That Fall* spurred the BBC to urge Beckett to write more for radio. After meeting him in February 1957, shortly after the first broadcast of the play, McWhinnie reported that radio had obviously captured Beckett's imagination. But he was preoccupied with the plans for the stage production of *Fin de Partie* which had run into all sorts of difficulties in Paris. As it happened, the first performance of the play (in the original French) took place in London at the Royal Court Theatre, and the BBC obtained permission to broadcast it. Michael Bakewell (one of the radio drama department's most gifted young directors) undertook the task of overseeing the transfer of the production to radio; it was broadcast on 2 May 1957.

In the same month, Beckett, who had been thinking of writing a work for radio in collaboration with his cousin, the composer John Beckett, wrote to McWhinnie that he could not foresee any chance of writing an original piece for radio

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for a long time to come; he suggested instead that John Beckett might be asked to compose music to accompany a solo reading from one of his prose works. He was thinking of a section of *Molloy*, "from the shore to the ditch", the final section of Part One.

This idea was eagerly accepted, and John Beckett commissioned to write the music (which eventually turned out to be for a small ensemble of nine players). To read the part of Molloy McWhinnie cast Patrick Magee, one of the group of superb Irish actors he had assembled for *All That Fall* (Magee had played Mr Slocum; Jack MacGowran, later to become the second of Beckett's preferred interpreters, played Tommy, the porter at Boghill Station). In November, shortly before the recording of *Molloy*, Beckett suggested another reading, of a passage from an unfinished novel, originally referred to in the BBC's records as *The Meditation*. The broadcasts of these two readings took place within the same week: *Molloy* (which ran to a length of 59 min. 14 sec.) on 10 December and the meditation, now retitled *From an Abandoned Work* (23 min. 30 sec.) on 14 December 1957.

THESE READINGS BY MAGEE were immensely effective and successful, not least with Beckett himself, who had found an ideal interpreter. One of the consequences of this success was that George Devine, who was planning the English-language première of *Endgame* at the Royal Court, suggested to Beckett early in 1958 that he should write a stage monologue for Magee to go with the performance of *Endgame* (just as the original French performance of the play had been linked with *Acte Sans Paroles I*).

Beckett mentioned in a letter to McWhinnie (26 February 1958) that he had indeed had an idea for a stage monologue for Magee, and in March informed him that he had written the piece, which involved the use of a tape recorder; he asked McWhinnie to send him operating instructions for such a machine as he had to be sure how it worked. Thus *Krapp's Last Tape* owes its existence both to Beckett's discovery of the fascinations of tape recording in the wake of the production of *All That Fall* (the reception of its second broadcast had been even worse than the first, so the tapes were sent to Beckett) and to his discovery of Magee as an ideal embodiment of characters like Molloy. Yet this play, directly inspired by Beckett's contacts with radio, is by its very nature incapable of being performed on radio. The effect of the play depends, above all, on the counterpoint of the powerful visual image of a man listening to his own recorded voice with his reactions to his past personality registering on his features. On radio it would be difficult to differentiate Krapp's recorded voice from his unrecorded utterance: both would be on tape, and to distort the recorded voice would be unrealistic, as tape recording only slightly distorts human speech.

The success of Magee's readings from *Molloy* and *From an Abandoned Work* led to further readings—from *Malone Dies* (with music by John Beckett, read by Magee, duration 1 hour 11 minutes 38 seconds) on 18 June 1958; and from *The Unnamable* (also with music by John Beckett, and read by Magee, duration 1 hour 51 seconds) on 19 January 1959.

THE BEGINNING OF 1959 brought the completion of Beckett's long-awaited second original play for radio. Copyright clearance for this as yet untitled manuscript was requested on 13 February 1959. On a later memorandum a suggested title, *Ebb*, was pencilled in. By April the title had definitely become *Embers*. It was in rehearsal from 19 to 23 June 1959 under Donald McWhinnie's direction; Jack MacGowran was cast as Henry, Patrick Magee doubled the parts of the Music and Riding Masters. The first broadcast took place on 24 June.

In *Embers* Beckett has moved further away from objective reality, closer to radio's unique ability to present an inner, wholly subjective reality. The background—a background of sound, the sea, Henry's boots on the shingle—is still real, but the voices are all internal: Henry's internal monologue as he tries unsuccessfully to conjure up his dead father's presence, and later the voices of his wife and daughter and her instructors which materialise in his memory. Apart from the basic situation, the images of an old man sitting by the sea, all the visual images built up are internal. They are all the more intense for that: like the strange, haunting scene of the two old men standing by the dying fire in the dead of night, arguing about something which never becomes wholly explicit, except that it involves an injection or shot of drugs.

If *Embers*, although its action is confined to the inner reality within its protagonist's mind, still retained the external reality of his situation within a real framework, *i.e.* on the seashore, Beckett's next two radio plays shed even that last tenuous link with the outside world.

WORDS AND MUSIC finally realised Beckett's long-cherished intention of collaboration on an original work with John Beckett. The decision to put this plan into practice is mentioned in a memorandum from Michael Bakewell to me (I

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had succeeded Donald McWhinnie as Assistant Head of the radio drama department) dated 20 February 1961. The completed manuscript of the play was in the hands of the BBC by the beginning of December. It was first broadcast on 13 November 1962.

Beckett's preoccupation with the process of human consciousness as an incessant verbal flow (on which the whole of his trilogy as well as *Texts for Nothing* was based) here found its logical culmination, and one which only radio could provide. For, after all, human consciousness—the self's awareness of its own existence—does not *only* consist of a constant stream of language. It has a non-verbal component as well, the parallel and no less unbroken stream of wordless consciousness of being, made up of body-sensations, inner tensions, the awareness of body-temperature, aches, pains, the throbbings of the flow of one's own blood: all are the multiple facets of non-verbal consciousness summed up in the overall concept of emotion. In the arts, as perhaps Schopenhauer first showed, this stream of non-verbal life-awareness, of life-force or *Will*, is the subject matter of *music* which portrays and represents the ebb and flow of the emotions. To give an adequate representation of the Beckettian exploration of the self's experience of itself, music therefore had to be added to the verbal stream of consciousness. This is precisely what Beckett attempts in his two later radio plays.

There are three characters in *Words and Music*: a Lord and Master, called Croak, and his two servants, Words (or Joe) and Music (or Bob), the court poet and court musician in his lordly household. In Beckett's trilogy, the self is split into a listener and a voice telling that listener stories. In this radio play the listener, Croak, commands one of his servants to regale him with a verbal, the other with a musical (*i.e.* emotional) stream of consciousness. He sets them themes on which to improvise, and if they fail to please he silences them by thumping them on the head with his club.

The movement of the play, after unsuccessful improvisations on the themes of Sloth, Love, and Age, converges on the evocation of the features of a beloved woman—on Croak's command to his servants to improvise on Face. At one point Croak exclaims: "Lily!" Here words and music merge into song. Words' shocked exclamation: "My Lord!", the sound of the master's club which slips from his hand, and the shuffling away of slippered feet indicate that the memory of fleeting fulfilment, "one glimpse of the well-head", has silenced Croak in total despair. The play ends with Words' attempts to make Music repeat the statement about the well-head again and again. The last sound is a deep sigh from Words.

This short play (it ran for 27 minutes 30 seconds) has appeared in book form; but so totally radiogenic is its very nature that the printed page cannot represent it. It exists only in sound—in radio or perhaps as a recording—for the third character, Music, in every way of equal importance with the other two, is of necessity absent on the printed page.

Cascando was an even shorter play than *Words and Music*. Beckett's work for radio echoes the tendency of all his other works to get progressively more concise—the BBC's production barely exceeded 21 minutes in duration. It was written in French in collaboration with the Rumanian composer Marcel Mihailovici—whose opera based on *Krapp's Last Tape* Beckett had greatly liked—with the French radio and Süddeutscher Rundfunk (Stuttgart) in mind. The French text reached the BBC in June 1962, but Beckett's translation took some time to be completed; there were also fairly lengthy negotiations to obtain the tape of the music as performed in Stuttgart, so that the first broadcast of *Cascando* in English (it had been transmitted in French by ORTF on 13 October 1963) did not take place until 6 October 1964. Donald McWhinnie directed the play as guest producer.

Here again we have three characters—the Opener, a Voice which is heard when he opens one door or channel of his consciousness, and Music, which emerges if he opens the other. Occasionally he opens both (doors? channels? he never specifies what it is that he opens), and then music accompanies the voice. The Voice tells a story about the pursuit of an elusive character called Maunu in the French, Woburn in the English version (Mau-nu has suggestions of evil-born, evil-naked; Woburn of born in woe, or burning in torment). The play ends at a point where Maunu/Woburn has almost been caught, yet whether he will slip away again remains uncertain in a final Silence. As in *Embers*, the action takes place in the vicinity of water. The Opener, who repeatedly mentions that people say that it is all happening in his head, might be seen as analogous to Henry who felt compelled to tell himself stories, to keep on talking all the time.

And here again the music supplies a new element, the non-verbal stream of consciousness which the Opener can evoke either by itself or in unison with the verbal flow of the voice. The outside world is again absent, except for the repeated statement by the Opener that for him it is May . . . .

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BESIDES BECKETT'S four original radio plays the canon also contains a translation by him which clearly displays his great skill as a translator and is also truly creative. This is the translation of Robert Pinget's radio play *La Manivelle—The Old Tune.*

The BBC had broadcast Pinget's stage play *Lettre Morte* in 1959. The script editor of the radio drama department, Barbara Bray, suggested to Pinget that he should write an original play for radio. On 5 November 1959 Pinget wrote to her: *"Voici, mon enfant, grande nouvelle confirmée: Sam fait la traduction."* In Beckett's translation the two old men of the original, M. Pommard and M. Toupin, became Mr Cream and Mr Gorman; their ramblings, which reveal the fallibility of human memory, assumed a strong and very clearly Irish flavour, particularly as in Barbara Bray's production they were played by those most Beckettian of all actors, Patrick Magee and Jack MacGowran. Beckett's translation had its first broadcast in the Third Programme on 23 August 1960.

APART FROM WORKS specially written for radio, the BBC has broadcast a number of Beckett's stage works. *Waiting for Godot* finally reached the listeners of the Third Programme more than seven years after it had first been suggested, on 27 April 1960. Patrick Magee was cast as Estragon, Donal Donnelly as Lucky. A new production with a different cast was broadcast in the less esoteric Home Service on 5 February 1962 in the framework of a series which surveyed the dramatic output of the previous decade under the overall title "From the Fifties." *Endgame*, which had been discussed with Beckett since the very first contacts between him and John Morris in 1956, did not get a broadcast till 2 May 1962 (Donald Wolfit played Hamm). This delay was partly due to scruples about the supposedly blasphemous line "The bastard, he doesn't exist."

One of the most interesting experiments in transferring a stage play by Beckett to the radio medium, and one which revealed the workings of Beckett's mind most clearly, was the broadcast of *Play*. The BBC's experimental group of radio actors and directors, The Rothwell Group, undertook (under the leadership of a young producer, Bennett Maxwell) to find a sound equivalent for the light beam which directs the utterance of the three characters whose heads protrude from their urns. Maxwell had the idea that it would be possible to replace the operation of that light by creating a continuum of sound—an endless loop of tape of the three characters' voices saying "I", which would be abruptly interrupted each time one of the characters was jerked into speech by that mysterious beam of light. Beckett had categorically refused permission to broadcast *Play*, but he agreed to come and listen to a playback of this experimental production.

I REMEMBER THAT PLAYBACK in my office very vividly. Beckett sat through the whole play with an enigmatic and inscrutable expression on his face. When it was over, he said: "I don't like it at all. You got it wrong."

He then proceeded to explain that the text fell into three parts: *Chorus* (all characters speaking simultaneously); *Narration* (in which the characters talk about the events which led to the catastrophe); and *Meditation* (in which they reflect on their state of being endlessly suspended in limbo). These three parts are repeated, and the play ends, as it began, with the Chorus. But, Beckett explained, there must be a clear progression by which each subsection is both faster and softer than the preceding one. If the speed of the first Chorus is 1 and its volume 1, then the speed of the first Narration must be 1 plus 5% and its volume 1 minus 5%. The speed of the following segment, the first Meditation, must then be (1 plus 5%) plus 5%, and its volume (1 minus 5%) minus 5%. The implication is quite clearly that any quantity plus or minus still has to be a finite quantity; however soft, however fast, the same text will go on *ad infinitum*, ever faster and ever softer without quite ceasing altogether.

Having expounded his suggested *modus operandi* Beckett had clearly become interested in the project. So when Bennett Maxwell and I asked him whether he would permit a broadcast provided we adhered to his prescription, he readily agreed, and supplied us with another modification of the text which is not apparent in its published form. In the original production at the National Theatre in London Beckett had not merely had the whole text repeated exactly as it had been spoken the first time round; he had supplied a new way of permutating the order in which each of the three characters spoke his text. Each character spoke the same lines in the same order *within his own text*, but the order in which he was called upon to speak was different. Beckett suggested that each character's part should be recorded separately and that these permutations of exactly the same words spoken in exactly the same way be achieved by cutting the tape together like the takes of a film.

This remarkable production of *Play* was first broadcast in the Third Programme on 11 October 1966.

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THE TRADITION OF READINGS of non-dramatic texts by Beckett was kept up throughout the 1960s. Two programmes of Beckett's poems, selected and introduced by John Fletcher, with the poems read by Jack MacGowran and the fine Irish actor Denys Hawthorne, were broadcast on 9 March 1966 and 24 November 1966. MacGowran also gave a stunning reading of *Imagination Dead Imagine* (18 March 1967).

A READING WHICH—so at least it seemed at the time—stood halfway between the mere delivery on the air of a text written for the printed page and a work which was specifically radiogenic was that of *Lessness*, Beckett's own translation of *Sans*.

Lessness is a text in which Beckett returned to his preoccupation with permutations of fixed verbal elements *ad infinitum*—a simulacrum of eternity itself, with time as an infinite combination of a finite number of basic elements. It started from six groups of statements, each containing ten sentences. The sentences within each of the six groups bear a distinct family likeness, being themselves variations on a single theme or image. Sentences from these six groups of ten—60 in all—were then combined by Beckett at random in a given order, and subdivided into paragraphs of varying lengths containing between three and seven sentences each. Having thus arrived at a random structure, Beckett then went through the process of combining the same sentences again, using the same method of finding a new sequence and paragraph structure by random selection. It is clear that the same process could be continued indefinitely; the barren landscape with the little upright human figure can literally stretch out to the end of time, or rather to its endlessness.

The suggestion that radio might be the means of making the very complex structure of this text more clearly visible came from Beckett himself via his London publisher John Calder, who passed the structural key to the work to me. Calder and I went to Paris to discuss the production with Beckett. He read a passage of the text to me, clearly indicating the exact intervals between each sentence and the longer intervals between the paragraphs, and also specified that he wanted the voices to be distinguishable from each other although so unified in tone that they might be aspects of the same voice. As in the case of the radio production of *Play*, he wanted each group of sentences to be recorded separately by their speaker, so that the final production would consist of exactly the same sentences re-combined in a different sequence by mechanical reproduction and editing, which would make it possible for the intervals of silence to be of exactly the same length, down to a tenth of a second.

For the production I tried to assemble a group of speakers whom I knew to be deeply sympathetic to Beckett's work: Nicol Williamson (who had given a breathtaking reading from *Texts for Nothing* at a Royal Court matinée some time before); Harold Pinter; Patrick Magee; Donal Donnelly; Denys Hawthorne; and Leonard Fenton. Once their recordings had been duplicated, cut up, and reassembled in their correct sequence, a strangely musical structure almost miraculously emerged.

ALAS, BECKETT WAS DEEPLY DISSATISFIED with the broadcast. He felt that the voices were far too strongly differentiated, that the reading seemed too slow (we had rigidly adhered to the tempo he himself had adopted when reading a sample to me), and thus too sentimental. With his usual kindness and courtesy he took the blame upon himself and confessed that the idea of using six different voices might have been a mistake. There is certainly a dilemma inherent in this concept, for in reproducing the work in German for Westdeutscher Rundfunk (Cologne) I tried to lessen the differentiation between the voices and to speed up the tempo—and the final result was far less effective than the original English version. But *Lessness* seems to me an ideal text for radio, which alone can bring out its daring structural conception. I feel that this structure can only be made manifest by having voices as differentiated as those in our original production, and that the idea that those voices emanate from a single consciousness (which I agree is crucial to the work) does not necessarily get lost by such differentiation. After all, the Opener and the Voice in *Cascando* are very strictly differentiated and yet remain clearly within one individual's head; and this is even more the case in *Words and Music*.

Be that as it may, the broadcast (25 February 1971) of *Lessness* on Radio 3, as the Third Programme had been renamed, had a very considerable impact on listeners—a fact attested by the unusual volume and fervour of letters of appreciation.

BECKETT'S INVOLVEMENT with radio was prolonged and many-faceted,[1] but his original contribution to the other electronic broadcasting medium, television, has been confined to a single work. This, too, may be said to have sprung from the relationships he had built

[1] More recent readings of prose works by Beckett on Radio 3 have included Patrick Magee's rendering of *The Lost Ones* (*Le Dépeupleur*) on 2 January 1973 and of *First Love* (*Premier Amour*) on 7 July 1973.

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up—and they were close and numerous—with the directors and actors he encountered in radio. Michael Bakewell, who was responsible for the radio production of the French version of *Fin de Partie* and successfully directed *Words and Music*, became head of the play department of the BBC's drama group in 1964. It was through his initiative that Beckett wrote a short television play for one of his favourite actors, Jack MacGowran.

This play, *Eh Joe* (first broadcast on 4 July 1966), is another proof of Beckett's appreciation of the specific capabilities of such highly technical media as radio and television, and makes masterly use of the television screen's potential, capabilities and limitations.

The play consists of a sequence of shots of a face wordlessly listening to a woman's voice emanating from an unseen source. In the course of the play the camera moves closer and closer to Joe's face, not in one smooth movement, but in nine clearly defined steps which stop immediately the voice resumes speaking. In the final move the camera comes so close that only Joe's eyes are visible; the next step can only be the blackness of a blank screen. It is clear that the woman's voice is in Joe's own mind, the reproachful voice of his conscience about what he had done to the woman. It also becomes clear that the camera is in some way the source from which the voice proceeds—Joe's conscience is moving in on him, until it becomes unbearably close. Only in television can this technique of a camera approaching a human face in gradual steps have the desired impact. The cinema screen would be far too large, so that the ever larger close-ups of Joe's features would become disproportionate and lose all human scale.

The impact of *Eh Joe* essentially depends on the fact that television is an intimate medium which, with its small screen, puts the spectator into intimate contact with a face which is on the same scale (in close-up) as other faces in the room. Similarly, the voice that is heard must—as in radio—be capable of being kept at a sufficiently low level to give the illusion of being inside the mind of the person whose face is observed, of being in fact an internal monologue.

It is almost impossible to find, in the vast literature of television drama, another play which is as totally conceived in terms of the small television screen and its intimate audience psychology as *Eh Joe*. Other television plays could be enlarged to the proportions of the cinema screen without too great a loss of impact. Many of them can even be effectively broadcast on radio, so much are they principally verbal rather than visual. As a demonstration of what is specifically televisual *Eh Joe* is unique and a masterpiece.

BECKETT'S PROFOUND UNDERSTANDING of the highly technical electronic media springs ultimately, I think, from the meticulous craftsmanship which forms his basic attitude to his work. His contributions to a production process are always characterised by humility towards the technical side of the work, combined with a respect towards the craftsmanship involved which seems to derive from an approach similar to that of the medieval craftsmen who regarded accurate workmanship as a form of religious worship. There is an intimate connection between the highest reaches of intuitive insight (inspiration in its truest sense, the inner voice) and the need for complete mastery of the techniques—of whatever order they may be—through which that inspiration is shaped, ordered, and communicated to listeners, readers, audiences. That combination of inspiration and craftsmanship characterises the work of a true master.

The Old Nurse

Nature, the old nurse, can rectify
Most errors; cool the hot, warm up the cold,
Heal wounds, crop down excesses—and supply
A second childhood when we grow too old.

Edward Lowbury

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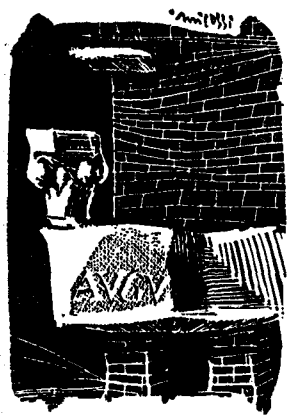
NOTES & TOPICS

Home to Cyprus

By Desmond Stewart



CYPRUS has given its name (*Κύπρος* in Greek, in Turkish *Kibris*) to the copper which underpinned the age of Akhnaton, as oil does ours. Until recently, in fact July 1974, an American company worked the planet's oldest continually exploited mine. Now a neat line leaves the ores on the south, or Greek side, the technical and shipping facilities on the Turkish. The line is the latest triumph of "Ethnicity." the principle whose universalisation was exposed by Mr Nathan Glazer in the February ENCOUNTER. Those who named the line were sturdily indifferent to PR values, Attila being no more calculated to win friends or influence people than Nero or Himmler.

From its Western peg-point on Morphou Bay the Attila Line weaves across the island to touch sea just south of Famagusta's golden, now empty, beaches. (This summer there are no tourists to complain that the jerry-built cliffs "cut the sun off.") The line is backed by no river or natural obstacle. Its central point is the old city of Lefkosa, as the Turks know Nicosia, with its eleven Venetian bastions.

As the newest member of the Partitioned Club, Cyprus resembles, and differs from, such countries as Ireland, Palestine, and Korea. Viet Nam has left the Club; Germany's partition is too much *sui generis* to provide analogies.

Like Ireland, Cyprus is a partitioned island; its division, also like that of Ireland, is enforced by the army of a neighbouring power and is based on religious more than "racial" difference. The red Turkish flag flies on mosques, the Greek flag on churches. Religion inhibits intermarriage.

"Turkish" Cypriots are largely the descendants of Greeks who for one motive or another embraced Islam. Once circumcised, new Muslims could marry widely, which accounts for occasional evidence of African descent in the Turkish sectors. Turkish immigrants to the island in Ottoman times came from an Anatolia whose Turkishness was equally in doubt. But Turkish Cyprus differs from Ulster in a notable respect. The Protestants who form the majority in Northern Ireland are the result of three centuries of history, not of a contemporary and planned resettlement. But affinities in this respect with Palestine are not complete, either. While the Turks who dominate the depopulated north have been "ingathered" from the south, most were natives of Cyprus; whereas most Israelis are the children of those born elsewhere than Palestine, or were themselves born abroad. And whereas few Jewish settlers in the Palestine of 1947 had any other homeland (unless they returned to the Europe of their persecution), Cypriots who felt Turkish had Turkey within sight. The artificiality of the Attila Line recalls the existing division between North and South Korea, and the former division between North and South Viet Nam. But unlike those lines, it has been drawn as the result of a conflict between two members of the western alliance.

With all partitioned countries Cyprus shares an explosive potential involving others. This, and its closeness to the cradle of Western culture, gives the island an importance unwarranted by its population (no larger than that of some London boroughs) or its size, which equals that of Norfolk and Suffolk.

UNDER ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS Cyprus maintained (without the subsidies enjoyed by Israel) the second highest standard-of-living in the Eastern Mediterranean. The prosperity was more than physical. An elected government censored neither the mails nor the foreign press; it vetted films on grounds of prudery, not politics. The old division of its friendly people into two communities, with two modes of eating and entertainment, made for a transition as easy and often as delightful as that from the snows of Troodos to the sunlit beaches.

Like other places which have catered to Europe's leisured class, Cyprus seems in retrospect paradisal. Those who sold land or services to the seekers of holiday sun or geriatric peace were the chief beneficiaries. In a decade a classless peasantry pushed from ashlar-and-mud to concrete boxes with shaded car-ports. Middle-aged Cypriots drove Austins (their sons preferred Jaguars) past mixed villages whose Turkish houses had been gutted in the troubles of the 1960s.

Attention to Turkish grievances was generally seen as less urgent than the placating of Greek

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extremists. The President-Archbishop's humane gestures (he took the trouble to go and condole when a typhoon blew down the Limassol minaret) were more than gambits. In spirit an Ottoman ethnarch, he had grown up with Turkish neighbours. With the older generation he remembered a time when social ease was not prevented by religious or linguistic difference. Who was it then who blew up his police-stations and threatened his own life? Were they the agents of the anti-communist, anti-Turkish, allegedly dependent-on-America Colonels? If Makarios had satisfied Turkish demands to be considered as a "partner nation", not merely as a religious minority, he would have been yet more vulnerable to accusations of betraying the ideal of "Greater Greece."

The Turkish leadership, too, was far from blameless. The Zurich Agreements, weighted though these were in favour of a minority comprising less than 20%, were made unworkable when the Turks refused a national army and vetoed a finance bill. More a mafia than an elected party, the Turkish leaders on the Island took orders from an Ankara faced with an unemployment rate running (at least in a veiled form) at near 30% and challenged by an increasingly militant Left.

The ghettoisation of the Turkish community was imposed by the local Turkish leadership, not the Greek. Up to 1974 a Turk could travel and work anywhere; a Greek was not allowed in the Turkish town of Lefka nor the Turkish sector of Nicosia. Fines, or worse punishments, were imposed on Turks who stepped out of line. Squeezed into the narrow corridor between their part of the capital and St Hilarion (its turrets overlooking Kyrenia harbour) the Turks were conscribed, dressed, and trained by mainland NCOs who consoled them with dreams (which few still believed) of a day of vengeance. The British had found *divide et impera* an economical maxim. When Kitchener was a young officer mapping the island, Whitehall toyed with plans to import Maltese Catholics as an element of balance against Greek nationalism. When this movement began seriously to threaten British rule, Turkish police were useful in controlling Greeks. Like the Assyrians in Iraq or the Copts in Egypt, the Turks were to suffer when the majority took power.

Greek officers commanding Cypriot conscripts chose the start of the office day to assault the Presidential Palace on its hill outside Nicosia. They terrified a contingent of Egyptian schoolgirls paying their respects. Archbishop Makarios, expert in the power-game, slipped away hatless on to a back road and into a passing vehicle. His palace was gutted.

The impressions of consequent invasion which I once scribbled on to paper begin to fade like war photographs: the dawn mist slowly lifting on a line of warships off Kyrenia, a Moby Dick ferry; Kyrenia's one gunboat sortying, circling, sinking. Helicopters in raucous shoals, transports throbbing and unhurried, all returning after five minutes to bring new invaders from the mainland whose mountains loom visible when the wind is in the north.

A Greek family wept in their shuttered hall as I called to buy potatoes. I gave, in turn, words of unwisdom: "Don't be afraid; the Turkish army is disciplined. . . ." Cars rushed from Kyrenia, hasty as vampires making their coffin before a Hollywood technicolor sunrise. The forest east to Kantara burnt orange all night. After two days of alternately sipping hot gins and tonic (there was no refrigeration) and plunging to the floor, came a cease-fire. Half way home through the plain, my three Greek passengers and I hurled our bodies on the metallic leaves of eucalyptus as a Skyhawk swooped on trembling us; an ambulance, a clutch of babies, a patch of shadow. By burning factories, through a Nicosia empty as the Marie Celeste, I came in the stench of burning rubber to Myrtou (my village, from which I had been absent) as the wrinkled black stockings of old women emerged from under primeval carobs, as jaunty youths slung with bullets patrolled the pathways. Night's sinister noises; gifts of eggs and grapes from hens and vines of imperilled ownership.

BUT IN RETROSPECT—and I find this confirmed by Greek friends—the worst period was the five days in '74 between Coup and Invasion. Coming after one-line entries of letters received and luncheons, some extracts in my diary catch my eye:

15 July: Monday

IN HIS BOOKSHOP Mr Kikkas's ashen face: also his girl assistant's. "You know they've killed the Archbishop?" People in the roofed market silent. At his bar Anastasis: "We've never known wars or coups on this island. We don't know how to cope with them." Shots were fired earlier over the rooftops. "Go back to Myrtou before they enforce their curfew." Outside the Greek camp—its white walls blued with slogans—National Guardsmen preen on a tank. Military marches blare from my car radio.

After lunch I risk the walk to the post office. Yesterday's mail-bag hangs uncollected from the door. Our affable postmaster is obediently indoors with his family: arthritic mother in black, sister, aunt, reserve-officer cousin and elfin nephew with hair-slide. All tense. His sister

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is cut off from her husband in Nicosia. The inane, now daylong music is broken by an announcement in "purified" Greek. *Kyrios* Nikos Samson has been sworn in as President of the Hellenic Republic of Cyprus by the Bishop of Paphos. Shortly thereafter Samson (who is remembered as an EOKA gunman) makes a speech of peremptory generalities. As if a Kray twin had moved to Downing Street. . . .

16 July:
THE 5 a.m. BBC SAYS Makarios lives. I try watering the apple trees. After 7.30 Costa and his son-in-law (who normally works at the Nicosia telegraph office) spray the vines. There is firing from the village. Costa's wife wept all night for her youngest son in the commandos. At 11 a.m. find postmaster still indoors despite the heat. Yesterday evening his nephew stood outside the door combing his hair. Three soldiers shooed him indoors with their guns. "Quite politely; they were Cypriots." Other soldiers came this morning and fired volleys into the air between the left-wing and the right-wing coffee-shops.

17 July:
OUR NEW MASTERS—a mainland Greek captain sits in Myrtou police-station—allow us to circulate till 2 p.m. On the way to Kyrenia am stopped, my car searched, by a Goyaesque quartet. The resort town is sombre. "The Cypriots," says a friend, "are only temporarily silent." The castle is said to be filled with leftists. My car is again searched as I take the mountain road into the Turkish enclave. Turkish Nicosia is ostentatiously normal. A newspaper editor sells me stationery. "Turkey must intervene. She cannot support further years of discussion." Like most Turkish notables he dreads Makarios (a few working Turks secretly admire him). Collecting three Union Jacks from the High Commission, I return to the coast and branch off to the mixed village of Kazafani and the Turkish tavern, *Five Fingers*. A Greek Cypriot from Australia has brought his children on holiday, but the swims he promised them have so far been few. "When I was a boy here, I had more Turkish friends than Greek. If outside powers would leave us alone, we'd get on as well in Cyprus as we do in Sydney." Back in Kyrenia, Anastasis: "Have a beer outside. We're not sure of the barman."

My garden's noon temperature of 102 sinks by nightfall to 82. As I have nothing to do, I sit on the terrace with a pink gin, transistor, and cats. I turn off the Turkish music, disregard an evening cockerel, the cicadas, the distant children, and brood till the News. Makarios has seen Wilson and Callaghan in London: the British Government still recognises him as President; the *still* sounds fragile. Eçevit, the Turkish prime minister (he once translated Ezra Pound) wants to co-ordinate plans with the British, who sound unresponsive. Samson's radio assures the Turks of good intentions. It warns that any citizen on the roads between sunset and sunrise will be shot. A Greek said this morning that many would prefer a Turkish occupation to Nikos Samson.

18 July:
THE YOUNG TURKS who depend on the Greek economy sit gloomily in the Kazafani cafe. Hasan hands me a Turkish newspaper. It shows "President" Samson as a youth led in handcuffs to a British gaol, then prancing a few years later with a despoiled star and crescent. I suggest a swim. Few of the Turks wish to leave the village: they know EOKA better than I, they tell me. Finally two risk the drive to the rocky cove at Karakoumi, the nearest water.

That night, finding my shuttered village, the rattle of gunfire from the nearby camp, unbearable, I move to the small hotel in Kazafani. Greeks, too, have taken refuge in the Turkish part of the village. One frowns past the taverna. He owns lands in Belapais, was in EOKA, now for some reason fears his own people. I suddenly notice that Kazafani is emptied of Turkish men, and the women keep looking at the sea. . . .

BARON CORVO used to write reviews of unwritten books. Will an ironic historian one day write an account of how in Cyprus a Turkish army intervened with minimum force, with exemplary discipline refrained from rape and looting, and, as guarantor of the island's constitution, restored Makarios and with him worked out a lasting settlement?

I am delayed for a few days before I can get permission to visit the house I left on 26 July 1974.

The government still controls the poorer three-fifths of Cyprus. The Greek Cypriots retain the ports of Larnaca and Limassol, the mosaics of Paphos, the shaly whorls of Troodos with its pine forests, asbestos and southern vineyards, and 18% of what statisticians call "tourist beds." They have lost the citrus, tobacco, and cereals watered by the rains and reservoirs of Pentadaktylos, the limestone ridge that runs from Mt Kornos in the west to St Andrew's monastery at the tip of the Karpas finger. They are virtually defenceless. Their shattered National Guard is outmanned and outgunned by an Anatolian army of 40,000.

One expects bitter despair from the ruined and humiliated. I do not find it. I visit two camps out of the many. The first is under trees within a few hundred yards of conquered

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Nicosia suburbs. It has the cool neatness of a British army rest-camp: whitewashed stones, a line for orderly queuing at the collective kitchen, a small camp library. Children go off to church in immaculate ankle socks and neat blue blazers. The second camp, government-run, is at wind-swept Strovolos. Its hundreds of tents flap in the wind from Buffavento and the string of villages which the refugees call home. By chance, in the avenue leading to the wash-house, my mother and I meet Michael Nicolaou. He is 45 and comes from Aphania, a mixed village near the old Famagusta Road. He invites us to his tent. It contains a large bed for his wife and himself and a small bed for his 15-year-old son who is studying at the English School.

While his wife brews coffee on a primus, Michael tells us about his village. "There were 650 Greeks, 400 Turks. We had a mosque and a church and lived as friends and as friends we must live again. I was first captured by the Junta and then by the Turks. My life was saved by a Turkish neighbour."

"Mine too," wails a head-scarfed old woman, plangent as a Sophoclean chorus. "We were escaping, my man and I, he's old and blind, when Turks from Turkey took us. They wanted to kill us. But our Turkish neighbours saved us."

Michael's wife serves coffee with an elegance which would be remarked in Belgravia. We hear from the adjoining tent the sobbing of a woman: her 28-year-old son is still listed as missing.

That night all the tents blew down.

MAKARIOS NOW USES an ultra-modern office in a new building. His grey-blue beard is still electric, his eyes still humorous. He speaks a delicate and careful English. I use "Your Beatitude" once, then the plebian "you."

The immediate prospects, he says, are not encouraging. The Turks are unreasonable and intransigent. But there are factors for hope. If the US in particular exerts pressure, if Dr Kissinger becomes "specific", (*i.e.* instead of merely recommending an arrangement which will suit all interested parties), Turkey will find motives for compromise. A permanent army of occupation will be needed to alienate Greeks from their homes in the north—that will be expensive to the Turks and onerous to the Turkish Cypriots. Meanwhile Turks are trickling back into the south, where they will be welcome and protected. He plans to appoint Turkish police and inspectors of claims in the Turkish areas.

The Archbishop's irenic accent is also struck by a fledgling organisation whose existence would have been impossible when the Junta (as the Cypriots call the colonels) controlled the National Guard's machine-guns. "*New Cyprus*" is a small grouping of artists, intellectuals, teachers, who wish to become a pressure group advocating steps which should, they say, have been taken long ago. They want to include Turkish Cypriots, and hope to do this through London. Their aim: to promote a sense of loyalty towards Cyprus by Cypriots of whatever ethnic or religious origin. If there are resemblances to the official aims of the Palestine Liberation Movement, there is an important difference. The members of "*New Cyprus*" rule out the use of violence.

WE HAVE OBTAINED permission to visit Myrtou, and we wait at the "frontier"—a customs-post will be introduced next month—near the Ledra Palace. After some time our escort joins us. A former schoolmaster from Larnaca, Mr Hasan talks of Islam as the Religion of Fraternity as we drive from the Greek lettering to Latin with dotted capital I's, a legacy of Ataturk whose newly installed bust greets us in Kyrenia. We have an hour to ourselves while Mr Hasan clears our papers with the police. Some shops are open: lost-looking Turks stand in their doorways. Others, like my travel agent, have been looted and locked. The harbour glitters, boats bob at anchor, all the café tables are on the quays, but not a customer appears, though it is 11 a.m. on a sunny morning.

We drive to Myrtou with assurances from Mr Hasan that we'll find our house intact. When John Haylock visited it in October, clothes, beds, bedding had gone, but my books and my mother's water-colours were still there. At Myrtou police-station we pick up a gentle police constable who tells my mother he too is a painter but lost his paints in Paphos. We drive to our house, not through the village, which is "forbidden", but by a dusty detour. Even so we pass four obviously emptied houses of the old style, and one new, dowry house, inhabited by settlers. John Haylock's front door is open and the breeze gently lifts its detritus.

The garden round our house has begun to look like a mini-jungle—the island had heavy rains this winter. The Union Jack is on the door where I affixed it with sellotape. But the front door opens on chaos. The floor is a mosaic of old *New Yorkers* and ENCOUNTERS and old *Horizons* cemented by human excrement and rubbish. Everything has gone, including diaries, correspondence, manuscripts, dictionaries. My mother's paintings have been dragged from their frames and burnt, not in the grate, but in the middle of the sitting-room floor. I need a drink. My mother finds me a jam jar and a small casserole in the otherwise looted kitchen; and Mr Hasan joins me (the policeman does not) in a triple brandy.

"Your house," says my escort, "is still okay,

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outside. Your garden needs a little care." The goldfish in the large irrigation tank have four inches of water, not the usual four feet. The oranges will die this summer. "We have stores of furniture. You could choose beds and come back."

He pauses. "But if you write what you have seen today . . . who knows? . . . it might be necessary to confiscate your property. . . ."

But writers cannot easily leave things unwritten. And while the Turkish army imposes its curious blend of police-state and anarchy—after seven months the looting continues, two old men who stayed in Myrtou have disappeared, you need permits each time you go to Kyrenia ("permits to swim" have yet to be issued)—those with perches elsewhere must prefer to perch on them. Sad are those British pensioners who put their savings into all those neat white houses. Husbands and wives do not go out together for fear of returning to emptied rooms. A message reaches me from someone I knew in Kyrenia. "We [Kyrenia-Turks] hate the Turks who've come from Limassol. We don't let them use the Kyrenia football stadium. They've taken all the best Greek houses. But the Turks from Anadolu [Anatolia] are worse. If I could get into a car boot, I would come to the Greek side. . . ."

The island has had a brutal stroke. Prognoses range from death to recovery, with an invalid's uncertain future the only compromise.

Cyprus, say the pessimists, is a pawn in a power game. Most blame a "CIA plot." A coup would remove Makarios, (a "neutralist", held to be "soft on communism"). Since the only Cypriots to launch it would be EOKA B, this would prompt a Turkish intervention. Double *Enosis* would follow, with each sector giving bases to NATO. What was always predictable is now obvious: a bi-zonal solution will be as unacceptable to the Greeks as the 1947 partition was to the Palestinians. The alienation of their land will eventually inspire guerrilla actions. As for the Turks, if this pretext is not given them, they will use some Aegean flare-up to complete their Turkish occupation. Whether a new Turkish province of Kibris became a US base would depend on Turkey's relations with Washington and the Arabs, certainly not on Cypriot wishes.

There are, however, some optimists. They take encouragement from the mood among the Greeks and from reports from the occupied north. The Turkish Cypriots undoubtedly resent the presence of an Anatolian army (many of them Kurds who cannot even speak Turkish) which rigidly controls their movements. If they are to be prosperous, they will need the skills and capital of the Greek Cypriots. Optimists envisage a cantonal, not a bi-zonal, island. Where Turks predominate, they will be in charge, but they will not evict non-Turks (and vice versa). For this to work, the islanders must surely be disarmed, and all foreign armies must withdraw from Cyprus.

Home to Cyprus, but certainly not to write, and not for long.

London Commentary

How "Dangerous" are the Crossman Diaries?

On Criticising Government from Within—By MAX BELOFF

THE DECISION of the Attorney-General to seek to halt by legal process the publication in book form of the late Richard Crossman's diaries—and not to await the advice on the matters of principle involved to be expected from the Committee of Privy Councillors on Ministerial Secrecy (the Radcliffe Committee) set up by the Prime Minister—means that any interim judgment on their value to the student of the British political system must rest upon the extracts published by the *Sunday Times* over nine issues between 26 January and 23 March 1975. Indeed one admirable essay on some aspects of Crossman's views as derived from these extracts has already appeared from the pen of Professor Esmond Wright, a former M.P. and a distinguished historian.[1]

It would be improper (and, perhaps, unlawful)

[1] Esmond Wright, "Supreme Authority of the Prime Minister", *Times Higher Educational Supplement* (30 May 1975).

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to speculate on the reasons which led the Attorney General to refrain originally from challenging the *Sunday Times* in the courts, while attempting to prevent publication of the book.[2] We do know that every attempt short of legal action was made by the Secretary of the Cabinet, Sir John Hunt, to prevent the *Sunday Times* from going ahead with the extracts, and that Sir John went to the length of arguing that a diary of this kind would be covered by the thirty-year rule governing the publication of and access to the official records of British government. We have of course, no means of knowing whether the *Sunday Times* extracts are fully representative of the material in the diaries or whether the book version would have included material even more explosive from the point of view of Sir John Hunt, Mr Samuel Silkin, and the Prime Minister. It is difficult to believe that hard covers would have made the difference. On the contrary, one remembers that under Russian Tsardom, articles of a radical kind were permitted in the so-called "thick Journals" that would have been censored if designed for the daily press, on the grounds that those who could afford to subscribe to the "thick Journals" would be men of substance, unlikely to be moved to revolutionary violence.

Here we have the principle stood on its head. What can be released to the general public may not be made available in a form more adapted for scholarly use.

MORE INTERESTING ARE the reasons which have moved those who have been concerned to prevent the diaries being published at all. We do know that the interests of the State are not involved in that no question of breaches of security arises. The *Sunday Times* undertook to delete any extract that might be subject to objections on grounds of security and we have no reason to believe that Mr Crossman's executors (who include a cabinet minister in the person of Mr Michael Foot) or his publishers would be any less open to instruction in this field. What is objected to by Mr Silkin is alleged breach of the doctrine of collective ministerial responsibility which demands, so he asserts, the full confidentiality of discussions between ministers and of the documents that give rise to them.[3] It is, as has often been pointed out, not easy to take this argument at its face value since a number of books dealing with the Wilson government of 1964–70, those of the Prime Minister himself and Lord George-Brown, and in particular Lord Gordon-Walker's book on the Cabinet, all throw light on divergencies between different members of the Cabinet and reveal some of the arguments that took place on individual issues. (A series of articles examining some of the different versions of incidents recorded in the diaries was started in the *Sunday Times* on 22 June 1975, but suspended after the Court hearings on 26-27 June 1975.)

The Crossman diaries have not opened a debate but continued an ongoing one. If one probes a little more deeply into the matter, and tries to understand why for instance the Prime Minister would rather see the diaries suppressed than attempt to deal with their alleged inaccuracies—for instance, in a second edition of his own book—one can make two points which help in understanding the panic in Downing Street and Whitehall.

WHAT INTERESTED CROSSMAN above all was the way in which British government operates; not the particular decisions arrived at, but the operation of the system itself.[4] For a Prime Minister who is once again in power with many of the same colleagues, the perspective is different—does the account conduce to a high or a low opinion of his performance in office? Does it enhance or diminish his ability to keep his present team together? What for Crossman was theory for Mr Wilson is practice.[5]

The second point is that Crossman's treatment of his period as a Minister reveals a good deal

[2] An injunction to prevent the *Sunday Times* from publishing further extracts was applied for on 26 June 1975; its scope was broadened to include all material bearing on the Cabinet's work over the period covered by the Thirty Year Rule. The injunction granted by Mr Justice Ackner was successfully appealed against in the Court of Appeal after undertakings from the *Sunday Times* to refrain from printing the contentious material pending the hearing of the action itself. *Cf. Times Law Reports* for 26–27 June 1975. For comment, see the leading article "The Secrecy of Government", in *The Times* (28 June 1975).

[3] Written reply by the Attorney General to a question from Mr Eric Heffer, MP, *Hansard* (18 June 1975) and the remarks in Court by Mr Gordon Slyn, Q.C., appearing for the Attorney General (26 June 1975).

[4] See John Mackintosh's comments in his article "The True Role of the Cabinet", *Sunday Times* (30 March 1975). Crossman's intention to write a book explaining the contemporary working of government was known to his colleagues and his diary records two lively but inconclusive discussions on the limitation to be placed on the publication of ministerial memoirs on the Cabinet on 26 January and 21 September 1967.

[5] The position of Mr Michael Foot is peculiarly delicate since his life of Aneurin Bevan includes a highly tendentious account of some aspects of the Attlee ministry of which his hero and the present Prime Minister (though not he himself) formed part.

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about his relations with his civil servants and enables one to challenge many of the myths that govern the treatment of these relations in the standard accounts of British government. While it is true that these revelations largely concern individuals no longer in the public service, one can understand the mandarinate's desire for the continued protection of its anonymity that underlies the rigidity of Sir John Hunt's objections. And while once again such criticism of civil service is not new, it has normally come from circles where prejudice against the Establishment was easier to identify and dismiss.[6]

What makes Crossman's diaries important—and will make them important even if, as is likely, alternative versions of some of the episodes recorded are eventually made public—is Crossman himself. While other holders of high office have reflected afterwards upon their experience, Crossman (like Woodrow Wilson) came to office with a standing interest in the nature of government and its functioning, and (unlike Woodrow Wilson) he both recorded the impact upon his own thinking of reality as he found it, and as Leader of the House made some efforts to change things.

But Crossman was more than just a talented academic teacher of politics who cherished the ambition to write a contemporary "Bagehot" and happened to find his way into the political arena. He was (like Woodrow Wilson again) a very complex character—and complexity helped to create the deep suspicions of his motives and methods that dogged his career in politics and in journalism alike. To the conventional background of Winchester and New College, Oxford, was added a highly unconventional involvement with the fortunes of European socialism, particularly in the German-speaking countries, which gave him a range of intellectual reference matching the range of social reference that was extended by his W.E.A. teaching before the War, and his representation of a predominantly working-class constituency after it.

Although as self-centred as any politician must be—from one point of view the enormous diary was itself a piece of sheer self-indulgence—Crossman was not inordinately ambitious. It would not have occurred to him to try to obliterate his social origins or national tastes and turn himself into a music-hall caricature of a proletarian leader like the ineffable Tony (*sic*) Benn. Where deep feelings were involved as they were in Crossman's Zionist convictions and his sympathy for the survivors of the holocaust, they were not set aside for the sake of personal advancement. Ernest Bevin could not forgive Crossman's rejection of his clumsy and malevolent policy in regard to Palestine; and this fact was probably sufficient in itself to prevent

[6] Lady Falkender (Mrs Marcia Williams) like all members of kitchen cabinets is almost bound to find civil servants distasteful, as they do her. An account by Mrs Barbara Castle of her experiences of the "stifling" of political decisions by civil servants, given at a seminar to senior civil servants in 1973, makes some points that also arise from the Crossman diaries. But Mrs Castle could be dismissed as a left-winger with a particular axe to grind. See: Barbara Castle, "Mandarin Power", *Sunday Times* (10 June 1973).

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Crossman getting ministerial office in the Attlee government, with the result that the perceptions with which he reached cabinet rank in 1964 were still those of a back-bencher. While it is true that his war-time work in propaganda brought him into touch with some aspects of the Whitehall machine, neither that field of activity nor the very special circumstances of war-time provided the normal kind of apprenticeship that many ministers have undergone. He had to learn from the beginning, and from the top.

CROSSMAN WAS, HOWEVER, a dangerous challenge to the accepted ways of doing things in yet another way. He was a supremely articulate politician in an era in which the ability to use language was becoming increasingly rare in the upper reaches of British government. He was not merely, at his best, enormously eloquent as a speaker, he was also a very good journalist. (Though not, as his brief experience in charge of the *New Statesman* indicates, a very good editor!) A politician who can also write good journalism is formidable. It is clear that the diaries, although the product of late-night dictation into a tape-recording machine, not the best recipe for stylistic elegance, have a certain degree of punch to them which would give the ideas they convey an additional impact if allowed to be read at length, and in book form. One can quite see that where Crossman got his story in first, the counter-versions would have difficulty in catching up. And what is anathema to run-of-the-mill politicians is likely to be even more odious to the mandarinate whose power rests to some extent upon intentional equivocation and the deliberate exclusion of the personal factor.

The strength of Crossman's position as a critic from inside, and the reactions evoked by his own personality must not, however, be allowed to obscure the very real issue between himself and those who are now trying to silence him posthumously. Crossman took the view—which he believed had Bagehot's sanction—that it is desirable that those who are active participants in a political system (and this now applies to the mass electorate) have a right to know how it actually functions and not to be put off with the conventional version, if this no longer corresponds to the truth. Those who oppose publication of the diaries (apart from a desire to safeguard particular reputations) see no merit in more open government. They believe that the accepted myths are salutary ones and that to impugn them destroys the authority of the country's rulers. Their instinct is to conceal.

The anti-Crossmanites may have more to be said in their favour than reformers would always be willing to admit. The fate of the Crossman reforms in parliamentary procedure—and the published extracts from the diary all pre-date this period of Crossman's work—would suggest that members of parliament are for a variety of reasons neither prepared, nor particularly anxious in many cases, to play the much more activist role in the oversight of government that Crossman wished to provide for them. Even those changes that have been retained have not involved as profound a change in the role of Parliament as Crossman would probably have liked to see. Similarly, most citizens would appear to be indifferent as to whether cabinet government operates along traditional lines or not. Such criticisms as they may have of the functioning of our institutions will relate to matters of substance, to disappointment with the performance of particular ministries, and to their views of where the blame might lie. To attempt to get a view of the system as a whole will generally seem something for academics only. Yet even if there is not much popular pressure to get at the truth, that does not mean that it is not worth attempting.

THE CONVENTIONAL VIEW of British government has the merit—from the point of view of those operating the system—of concealing responsibility where it can be concealed, and diffusing it where it cannot. The Cabinet is thought of as a supreme decision-making body under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister deciding upon policy where the government as a whole is involved, and settling contentious issues where more than one ministry is concerned. In these circumstances, the confidentiality of the proceedings might seem fully appropriate and an important source of strength. A group of gentlemen meeting together in private, with no formal record of their business, might prefer the conventions governing the behaviour of gentlemen in private life. (Though even in the 19th century, accusations that the press was being manipulated by one minister so as to bring pressure on his colleagues were not unknown.) Ministers, it was presumed, came into office with certain policies to which they were known to be attached and which they hoped with the aid of their departments to carry out. In the more traditional aspects of government at any rate, the civil servants were servants indeed—clerks not policy-makers. Their loyalty was to their own minister, not to the civil service as a whole.

The contemporary realities are very different. The Cabinet—a much larger body than in the 19th century—does not and probably cannot function as a policy-making body on major issues. It is not a private group but the apex of a system of committees, serviced like itself by a powerful secretariat, and designed to give answers to

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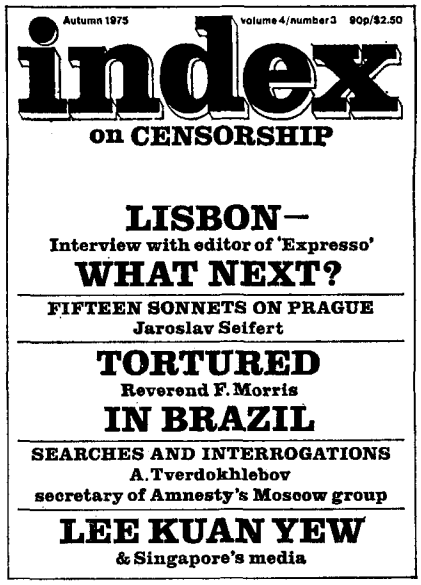
questions put up through the governmental process. Hence the requirement for a detailed agenda with voluminous supporting papers, and the decisive importance of the "minutes" which record for action what the Cabinet secretariat thinks is necessary, and only such argument as it is felt desirable to record. The proliferation of junior ministers as well as of officials, and of important bodies (like boards of the nationalised industries) on the periphery of government, reflects the vast increase in functions that the modern State has assumed.

In a system of this kind, where most important decisions will require the assent and cooperation of more than one department, where local government still has an important subsidiary role, and where the right of pressure-groups to have their say is generally accepted, policy is bound to be the product of long drawn-out negotiations by which the Minister's hands will be virtually tied long before the matter gets to Cabinet. The weakness of the Minister's position is further enhanced by the recklessness with which successive governments play about with new allocations of responsibilities between departments, often on the plea of administrative efficiency, but usually as part of some bargain involving personalities. In the Whitehall jungle, only the most sure-footed officials can find their way around; and they can only get at least something of what they are after by respecting the idea of the civil service as a single machine, and paying proper respect to its great panjandrums at the Treasury and in the Cabinet Office (and by now, one must suppose, in the Civil Service Department as well).

An incoming Minister, who in most departments can expect so brief a tenure that his chances of mastering the detail of business over most of the field are minimal, may well desire to leave his imprint in some major piece of legislation. But if his Party has been out of office, the preparations that have been made will almost certainly prove inadequate. On important economic issues in particular, modern legislation is likely to be so complex that only the resources of a Department suffice to frame it. Ideas which seem acceptable in Opposition, when only outlines can be discussed, may turn out—like the Land Commission bill, to use an example from the diary—to be nothing but an embarrassment.

Even a Minister of Dick Crossman's energy may find that departmental procedures are such as to make it difficult for him to use for his own purposes the finely tuned engine of which he believes himself to be in command. The private office is not the equivalent of the Continental *cabinet*; and to seek to by-pass the Permanent Under-Secretary so as to get advice from the operative levels of a Ministry is likely to result in



Fred B. Morris

'Torture brutalises and dehumanises not only those who are tortured, but those who torture, those who are intimidated by the torture of others and those who try to ignore the fact that torture exists.'

Expresso, Lisbon

Balsemão: 'The Press has a part to play in a revolution but its part can only be useful if the Press is free to criticise everyone. No exceptions. So that those who are leading the revolution are aware of public opinion.'

Lee Kuan Yew

'I will control the input from outside of the pernicious and vicious and protect our people from over-exposure to what is bad.'

Jaroslav Seifert

'Prague! Like a draught of wine her savour,
Though she should lie in ruins round me,
Though fate from hearth and home should hound me,
And choke her soil with blood.'

Tverdokhlebov

'On the evening of 27 November I leave the cinema. I have seen a French detective film . . . what I liked best was a remark made by two American gangsters, "Nothing like this has ever happened to us". Major Shevchuk of the KGB and his assistant stop me in the street and put me in a bright Volga. . . . They take me straight to my home. The search begins at 8 p.m. . . .'

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damaging battles from which the Minister is likely to emerge the loser.

IT IS PROBABLE THAT a similar diary from a Tory source would reveal a state of affairs and reactions to it not all that different to what we get from Crossman. The Department of Education and Science would seem to be as firmly entrenched in its antipathy to selection (that is to say, as socialist in its outlook, as the Treasury has traditionally been anti-collectivist and in favour of "sound money"). In the case of Labour Ministers, there is, however, the added complication of the fact that they are in a sense mandatories of their Party and of "the Movement." The degree of this commitment to the Party Manifesto was probably weaker in 1964 and 1966 than in 1974 but the extent to which Crossman thought of himself not merely as a Minister but as a Labour Minister is very evident. Crossman himself was too intelligent to attach overwhelming importance to some of the symbolic aspects of the connection; he notes with amused impatience Barbara Castle's preoccupation with the annual elections to the National Executive Committee. But he found nothing very odd about using his Ministerial position to party advantage. To revise local government boundaries as suggested for greater efficiency was all very well—but not if it meant that the consequential change of constituency boundaries might put some Labour seats at risk!

So manifold are the pressures upon Ministers and the Cabinet—so time-consuming the demands of Parliamentary business and formal public appearances—that one could argue that there is no way in which this system could actually work. And the record of the last decade might well suggest that it does work very badly indeed. That it does work even lamely is attributable to the fact which Crossman seized upon and amply illustrates—the unseen and informal methods of arriving at decisions that are forced upon all Prime Ministers. The right they retain—a much more important one than the right of dissolution of which the textbooks make so much—is the right to consult whom they choose. It is not so much a matter of an "inner cabinet" which may or may not crystallise from time to time, as of an ever-shifting grouping of senior ministers whom the Prime Minister may consult collectively, or even individually, and whose weight is such that once they are agreeable to a course of action the Cabinet as such has no serious alternative but to accept and implement their decision. And this is what Crossman saw as "Prime Ministerial" government.

> To make Cabinet government work [Crossman wrote] as against Prime Ministerial Government, the Cabinet should really discuss general policy. Whereas in our case all that happens is that 23 of us come, each with his particular pressures and problems, trying to get what he wants. And we do avoid any collective decisions of policy except perhaps on defence and foreign affairs."

The ability of the inner group to keep to itself the major decisions is enhanced by its monopoly of some of the vital indicators of the economic and financial situation—hence the repeated way in which sterling crises have suddenly flared up and cut across the normal channels of policy-formulation. It does not, however, mean that other Ministers need or do adopt an attitude of total passivity. They can (as Crossman illustrates) attempt to create a cabal—a group of Ministers pledged not to accede to some presumed objective of the Prime Minister. They can and do attempt to influence opinion in the Party and outside through calculated leaks and other devices. So much is indeed leaked of set design about what Cabinet is considering at the very time the issue is live, that the fuss made about the convention of unanimity where the diarist is concerned might seem a little overdone.

THE "AGREEMENT TO DIFFER" over the EEC referendum provides yet another example of the fertility in expedient of Prime Ministerial government. It seems more important to maintain the formal unity of the Cabinet than to insist on its accepting a common view. The public case for and against may be argued, provided that the ultimate verdict is accepted in respect of the actual conduct of business. While expedients of this kind may preserve the position of a Prime Minister and his command over his party, they may at the same time enhance suspicions that politics as a whole is a mere charade, that those best qualified to hold views on great issues of the day do not hold them strongly enough to be willing to jeopardise their chances of office, and that the ordinary voter is being in some way cheated of his right to good government.

It is upon one's judgment of the state of the nation that one's views about the desirability of suppressing the Crossman diaries must, therefore, depend. Of course, in ordinary circumstances there would always be much to say for the conventional view. Cabinets, like other committees, are more likely to arrive at acceptable decisions if the confidentiality of deliberation can be sustained. Civil servants are more likely to risk unpalatable advice if they know that the advice they give is not going to be revealed for the duration of their own careers.

But the circumstances are not ordinary. The conventions of one now irrecoverable period in the history of British government are being

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applied to a new and different situation. Crossman's own notion of Cabinet government as it should be was Utopian. British government today is both too weak and much too strong; strong enough to destroy through excessive taxation the element of private property rights upon which all freedoms depend, and the element of economic incentive coupled with the right of inheritance which is the only motor force that can provide greater prosperity. On the other hand, British government is too weak to deal with the rival bureaucracies of the entrenched power-groups and notably the Trade Unions.

IT MAY BE TOO LATE to prevent the decline in the quality of the public services and the security of private rights which have increasingly come to characterise the British scene. But if there is any hope for the future it can hardly lie in obscurantism, in accepting the rights of rulers to offer misleading accounts of their stewardship. To reform we should first need to understand. The benefit that the diaries could confer vastly outweighs the alleged dangers that would follow their publication. It is not much use disputing for precedence at the captain's table while the ship goes down.

International Commentary

A Reply to Solzhenitsyn

On Saying "Yes" or "No"—By RAYMOND ARON

THE PERSON OF Alexander Solzhenitsyn inspires me with too much respect and his work with too much admiration for me to refrain from venturing a reply to the summons and challenge he hurls at us—at all of us who, in the thirty years since the collapse of the Third Reich, have defended or believed ourselves to be defending that which is no longer referred to as "the free world."

The West, cries Solzhenitsyn, has unwittingly lost World War III without even doing battle. It has lost because men are always inclined to "perpetuate prosperity at the expense of certain illusions." Our present task, therefore, is not to avoid a Third World War but to stop the Fourth —"to stop it . . . not fall on our knees. . . ."[1]

This situation, he tells us, is apparent to "any average man in the Eastern countries from Poznan to Canton." I take the liberty of replying that the average man of the West sees it differently without being altogether wrong.

THERE HAS BEEN NO "World War" between the Soviet Union and the West since 1945—no war but an historic rivalry of power and ideas. The limited wars in Korea and Viet Nam lasted for three and thirty years respectively. In 1949 the Chinese Communist Party won a civil war which had been in progress since well before World War II. The face of the world has changed in thirty years, granted; but these changes do not all constitute defeats for the West. They are not all consequences of our weakness or cowardice but stem from three historical series of quite another import.

Thanks to military operations and agreements undertaken by Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill between 1943 and 1945, and to the West's purely defensive strategy after the end of hostilities, the Soviet Union dominated the countries of Eastern Europe and, simultaneously, imposed a system of government modelled on its own. Roosevelt and Churchill made a promise—which they kept—to return to the Soviet Union any Soviet citizen who fell into their hands, whether soldier or civilian. They consigned hundreds of thousands and millions of human beings to detention or death. This "final secret" has recently been exposed by Lord Bethell's book.[2] Solzhenitsyn gives us a harsh reminder of this, and rightly so.

The West did not, on the other hand, consign China to the Communists. Mao Tse-tung, the ideological and military leader of an immense peasant revolt commanded by a political party, ultimately triumphed, perhaps with the aid of Japanese aggression. We are ill-acquainted with what goes on inside his vast country. We do not

[1] See Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "The Big Losers in World War III", *International Herald Tribune*, 24 June 1975; reprinted from the *New York Times*.

[2] Nicholas Bethell, *The Last Secret* (André Deutsch, 1974): see also Don Cook's review-article in ENCOUNTER, July 1975.

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know whether it, too, conceals "labour camps", and whether heretics or ex-heretics, if not exactly confessing like Zinoviev and Bukharin to crimes which they have not committed, at least avow their mistakes and affirm their desire for redemption. I distrust glowing reports by visitors (we were treated to accounts in similar vein forty years ago, when Stalinism was at its worst); but despite my universal horror of totalitarian techniques I still think the Americans took the right decision when they refused to back Chiang Kai-shek's régime to the limit.

The U.S. extreme Right, a victim of the illusion of American omnipotence, accused Roosevelt and Truman of having "lost" China—as if it had ever belonged to anyone but the Chinese themselves. I do not know if or at what juncture the Communists' victory in China was inevitable, but in 1946 General Marshall gave Truman a wise piece of advice which we French should ourselves have followed in Indo-China.

FINALLY, and this is the third of the three factors I mentioned, the abandonment or collapse of the European-built empires in Africa and Asia produced exhaustion in the ex-great powers of the old continent and anti-colonialism in those new great powers, the Soviet Union and the United States. Solzhenitsyn himself, being true to his desire for truth and justice, cannot fail to approve of de-colonisation even if a number of the régimes which arose on the morrow of the European withdrawal substituted one despotism for another.

Only one post-colonial régime has invoked the Soviet or Chinese model and borrowed its practices: that of Viet Nam. France should not even have attempted to re-establish her authority in Saigon, Hanoi, or Phnom-Penh in 1944–5. December 1946 saw the start of a thirty-year conflict compounded of national liberation and civil war. I refuse to compare, in a few short lines, the relative merits and demerits of the Hanoi and Saigon régimes. I feel in general that the Western press displayed excessive severity towards the turpitudes of Saigon, which were visible to the naked eye, while failing to recognise the less discernible cruelties of Hanoi. But it is no less inaccurate and unfair to cite the opposition of the young (and not so young) to the Viet Nam war as if it amounted to a mere refusal to "bear the pain and anguish of far-away war." This refusal undoubtedly contained an element of sanctified egoism, but also of idealism, conscience, and doubt. A democratic nation consents to fight only if it feels morally committed, convinced that it is defending a vital interest, some essential principles, or at least the better cause. The intellectuals of the West declined to see absolute evil in the

Taxing the Nerves

Washington

THE *U.S. government may have to expel Alexander I. Solzhenitsyn from the republic, not only as a hands-across-the-barbed-wire gesture of solidarity with its détente partner, the Soviet government, but also to save President Ford and his attendants from nervous breakdowns.*

This is not the first time that Solzhenitsyn, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, has taxed the nerves of the mighty. Last year Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev, having decided that he could not conveniently kill Solzhenitsyn and could not endure the sound of his voice, expelled him.

Solzhenitsyn became a nuisance to Gerald Ford when AFL-CIO President George Meany invited Solzhenitsyn to Washington to give a speech in which he reiterated his low opinion of détente, as the United States practises it. He believes this policy reduces the United States to craven, degrading reticence about slave labor, concentration camps, and other problems of human rights in the Soviet Union.

SOLZHENITSYN IS, **of course, correct: The U.S. government thinks such reticence is "necessary" lest the Soviet government get angry and refuse to accept U.S. trade subsidies, or engage in our memorable grain deals. But mere truthfulness does not redeem politically inconvenient speech, and Solzhenitsyn carries free speech to inconvenient conclusions.**

His presence here posed a problem: Should Mr Ford meet with him? In coping with this problem the President contrived to confirm Solzhenitsyn's point while snubbing him for having made it.

Mr. Ford nervously diagnosed Solzhenitsyn's presence here as a foreign policy problem, and summoned advice from the National Security Council, which copes with such threats to the nation's security. He and aides brainstormed about how to justify snubbing the man who, outside U.S. and Soviet government circles, is recognised as one of the moral heroes of the 20th century.

ACCORDING TO REPORTS, *several aides, showing a flair for baseness that would have stood them in good stead with the previous adminis-*

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austere and merciless régime of the North. Solzhenitsyn, who so properly exposes the weaknesses of the West, can hardly be surprised at that.

WHERE DOES THIS leave us today? Here too, let us discriminate. It is indeed true that Westerners, and the Americans in particular, are daily indicted at the UN by dozens of countries which respect not a single one of the ideals they profess. The Assembly, composed of representatives of some hundred and sixty countries, enacts a comedy which alternates between the farcical and the loathsome.[3] But this caricature of an assembly does not make history; and even though the Communist states generally support the resolutions, protests, declarations, demands and condemnations voted by the countries of the Third World, the latter—Cuba excepted—act on their own account. They do not obey "one and the same centre" nor allow it to manipulate them.

The West is assuredly in retreat from a historical standpoint, and relative to the status of Europe in 1914 this retreat appears normal. If history has nothing more to show than imperial cycles, then the West is nearing the end of one such. But in renouncing its African or Asian Empires it did not betray itself or surrender: it pursued its own vocation.

IT IS NOW CONFRONTED by two ordeals, one of them fraught with the risk of war and the other purely moral: the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries, and the European security conference. I do not despair of gradual pacification in the Middle East, and European governments are not merely yielding to blackmail when they try to establish new relationships with the oil-producing countries. On the other hand, I am one of those—and there are not many left—who see no reason to consecrate the present status of Europe at Helsinki. We ought to realise that all the Soviet Union owns or dominates ceases to be negotiable, whereas everything still held by ourselves remains permanently so.

THESE CONTROVERSIES highlight the ultimate dialogue about the nature of politics and, above all, international politics. Solzhenitsyn's unrivalled strength reposes in his person and in that which defines his message: an unqualified refusal to lie. We may not be able to tell the truth, he insists, but we can always refuse to lie. He regards the Soviet régime as perverse in this

[3] See: Elie Kedourie, "The UN Follies", ENCOUNTER, August 1975.

of the Mighty

tration, questioned Solzhenitsyn's mental stability. The idea of American politicians rendering negative judgments about Solzhenitsyn's mental health has an antic charm, but such judgments were not publicly advanced to justify the snub.

Other aides reportedly noted that during his visit to the United States, Solzhenitsyn is promoting the sale of his books. They said the President should not do anything that might even indirectly help a commercial promotion.

A few days earlier Mr Ford met with the cotton queen. A few days after that he summoned photographers to the White House lawn where he kicked a soccer ball with Brazilian star Pele, for the benefit of the American entrepreneurs who are paying Pele $4.5 million for promotion.

PRESS SECRETARY **Ron Nessen, keeper of the presidential image, explained that Mr Ford could not see Solzhenitsyn because of a "crowded schedule." Nessen added: "For image reasons the President does like to have some substance in his meetings. It is not clear what he would gain by a meeting with Solzhenitsyn."**

Nessen may have a point, but if so it reflects on Mr Ford's ability to receive, rather than on Solzhenitsyn's ability to impart, wisdom. The President's image thus clarified, like butter, Nessen refrained from adding the salient point: Brezhnev frowns on Solzhenitsyn, but not on Pele.

OBVIOUSLY MR FORD *decided that meeting Solzhenitsyn would be inconsistent with détente. Obviously Solzhenitsyn is correct: Détente, as practised by the United States, prevents even gestures of support for the cause of human rights in the Soviet Union.*

Certainly Solzhenitsyn was not surprised by Mr Ford's snub. As he said in his Nobel lecture:

> **"The spirit of Munich has by no means retreated into the past; it was not a brief episode. I even venture to say that the spirit of Munich is dominant in the 20th century. The intimidated, civilized, world has found nothing to oppose the onslaught of a suddenly resurgent fang-bearing barbarism, except concessions and smiles."**

Détente has conferred upon Brezhnev veto power over the appointments calendar of the President of the United States. Perhaps Brezhnev, in the spirit of détente, would refrain from seeing people offensive to the U.S. government's moral sensibilities—if it had any.

George F. Will

in the INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE (PARIS)

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respect because it institutionalises falsehood. Despotism is called liberty, a Party-subservient press passes for free, and, at the time of the Great Purge, Stalin proclaimed the Soviet constitution the most democratic in the world. Solzhenitsyn's voice has great carrying-power because it never ceases to remind us of this intrinsic perversity in totalitarianism.

To deal with all countries regardless of their internal systems is to lapse into cynicism. To wish to disseminate a particular system throughout the world ("a world safe for democracy", in Woodrow Wilson's formula) or wage universal and unremitting opposition to a system deemed evil, is to hazard a crusade if one takes the offensive or, if one remains on the defensive, to risk losing battles in advance. More divided than ever by principles and inequality of wealth despite improved methods of communication countries must co-exist if they are not to destroy each other. Which policy offers better prospects for the West, for freedom confronted by Sovietism—expansion or restriction of commercial exchanges?—rapprochement with China so as to offset Soviet power, or an avowal of the same hostility towards all Communist countries? No one should give a categorical response to either of these questions. There is only one categorical imperative: to refrain from construing the compromises involved in diplomacy as moral surrender. Whatever one hears on all sides, the historic rivalry between the Soviet Union and the liberal West is still, notwithstanding conflicts of interest between the West and the Third World, the crucial issue of our time.

The West has yet to be defeated in this historic contest. It is the West which still possesses the greatest store of scientific or technical skills indispensable to the survival of the billions of human beings who inhabit our planet. It is the West which still embodies, however imperfectly, the type of social organisation aspired to by the majority of ordinary people in the East and West alike. The economic crisis, American self-doubt, and the excesses of intellectuals everywhere (the intelligentsia of Paris deserve a special mention) are producing a *fin du siècle* climate.

MAY IT BE that Solzhenitsyn is helping us to recover our poise. The West is threatened, true, but as much by loss of faith in itself as by Soviet power. And it will only survive on two conditions: by listening to the admonitions, however emotional, of those who are or believe themselves to be the victims of the conflict; and by not confusing the partial and inescapable amorality of international relations with moral resignation.

More than by any other man, we shall be aided in this future task by Solzhenitsyn, who says "*no*" to a mendacious régime without saying "*yes*" to revolution. For, in the same way, we say "*no*" to surrender without saying "*yes*" to war. Within nations, just as in the relations between states, it is this twin refusal which we must all uphold, undeceived about the dangers involved, because we are for ever grazing violence on the one hand and resignation on the other.

Joyce Le Pretexte

By Arnold Goldman

IN 1902 TWENTY-YEAR-OLD James Joyce fled Dublin for Paris. His first attempt at self-exile proved abortive, but 18 years later the impending author of *Ulysses*, himself moving steadily towards a self-generating world of linguistic artifice, returned to settle in the City of Art. Many Irishmen have since thought, and said, that the place was welcome to their "wildgoose", and Joyce knew that he had sunk to the level they expected him to: "*Parysis, tu sais,*" he wrote in *Finnegans Wake, "appartient à qui se parise."*

Students of Joyce, especially the Americans, generally manage allegiance to both Joyce of Dublin and Joyce of Paris. In June they held their fifth biennial International Joyce Symposium at 28, rue des Francs-Bourgeois, an address which would have amused the Fabulous Artificer who called himself a "poor Joyce." The Symposium is generally a mini-version of the dread American Modern Language Association Conference, the annual professional extravaganza of literature teachers, whose panel discussions and serial twenty-minute-long "papers" export, like Coca Cola, without respect of place.

As in past symposia in Dublin and in Trieste—the first station of Joyce's European cross—an unacknowledged battle was waged to establish the True Succession. Usually it is the Irish telling the Americans that only the Irish could hope to understand Joyce: though what they do understand by him remains clouded in rhetoric and Guinness. On this occasion a two-pronged French

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attack faced the more numerous Americans. Speaking only in French, and only to other Frenchpersons, helped a lot, of course. The Americans (and English and Irish) responded with much sad headshaking at the stylish banalities they understood the Gauls to be perpetrating, unwilling to credit the arrival of any Joyce other than their own on the scene. But on the showing of the week, particularly in the contributions of M. Butor, Mme Sarraute, M. Sollers of the journal *Tel Quel*, and Mme Cixous, the veritable Isis of the Parisians, there is now a French Joyce, and he is less the Joyce of *Ulysses* than of *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce the destroyer of language and of forms.

The opportunity for an orgy of French-bashing was, however, served the Symposium on a platter when the French Government, which had provided the Grand Amphitheatre of the Sorbonne for the "*séance inaugurale*," sent neither the Rector nor the promised Secretary of State for Universities to welcome the participants and introduce the first speakers. Instead there appeared a comic civil servant with little idea of why he had been sent, and less as to the identity of Joyce, Maria Jolas (the Symposium Hon. Sec.) or Jacques Lacan, the speaker. This slight was regarded as cavalier at best and by the residual spirit of the Events of 1968 as a characteristic "political act." The environment of the Symposium proper only aggravated the situation, being a hastily- and ill-constructed gallery with only the thinnest of hessian partitions between the concurrent academic sessions. (Thus was the structuralist discussion of the "seepage" between character and environment in fiction illustrated for real.) The mysterious 30 bottles of Irish whisky which appeared on the last night seemed too little, too late.

THE GALLERY'S EXHIBITION, *James Joyce et Paris*, opened to the public on 23 June. It is firmly slanted towards the other aspect of the French claim to Succession, dedicated as it is to the Parisian companions and accomplices of Joyce who by their "abnegation" permitted the author to complete his life's work (all in bold type and two languages as you enter). So in what is partly a replay of a similar post-war exhibition also organised by Bernard Gheerbrant of the publishing house of La Hune, major sections of the display are dedicated to the Joycean memorabilia of Adrienne Monnier and Sylvia Beach, booksellers and publishers (of Joyce), Valery Larbaud, Stuart Gilbert (author of the first exegesis of *Ulysses*), Paul and Lucie Léon, and of course Eugène Jolas (editor of *transition*) and his wife Maria.

Indeed Mme Jolas—*née* Maria McDonald of Louisville, Ky., and proud of it—was omnipresent. Honorary head of the Symposium, participant in discussions, with twice the energy of the Full Professors half her age, she acted as factotum, concierge and carnival barker, dragooning audiences off the pavements for her favourite speakers. But if the exhibition memorialises *her* Joyce, the week seemed also to mark the supercession of that Joyce by the Joyce of M. Butor, M. Sollers, *et al.* M. Sollers, in particular, seemed to have effected to his own satisfaction a marriage between *transition*'s flaunting of *Finnegans Wake* as the "*révolution de la verbe*" and the politics of revolution proper, announcing with gusto that the *Wake* was simply the most important anti-fascist book ever written. (More Anglo-American headshaking).

Joyce's politics in fact, long (like Yeats's and Eliot's) *infra dig* as a subject, surfaced at regular intervals, buoyed also by currents of Irish nationalism. (An unsigned note marked "Up the IRA" was even cautiously passed to a panel's moderator.) Sollers's view that the language of the *Wake* had *already* killed English, the language of the imperialist oppressor, was not uniformly admired. Leslie Fiedler, the American critic, announced his sorrowful farewell to Joyce Studies precisely because Joyce, though a great genius, was surely not a man of the people providing them with a sustaining popular culture. His Joyce was, alas, an élitist writing for an élite. Joyce's biographer, Richard Ellmann, claimed that Joyce's politics were those of Arthur Griffith—"the coming man" as Molly Bloom remembers her husband Leopold enthusing. Few agreed with this either, but then nobody seemed to agree very much with anyone else anyway, about Joyce's narrative techniques, his themes, his structures, his life or his texts. The panel assembled to discuss the *future* of "Joyce Studies" couldn't even agree whether there was nothing left to do or nothing yet accomplished.

"Sham Joys", as Jacques Lacan seemed to call him in his mournfully playful lecture "Joyce le symptome", had the last laugh after all. Above a large portrait of him in the exhibition foyer was a notice, "*tailleur*" (relating to the former use of the premises): only the "t" had been obliterated, leaving "*ailleur*"—as near as can be "elsewhere, somewhere else."

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Fluid at the Centre

Kipling New and Old—By J. I. M. Stewart

In 1917 Kipling published a volume of short stories entitled *A Diversity of Creatures*. The creatures include Mary Postgate, who lets the German airman die; Winton, who is jeered at by Beetle and caned by his friend and study-mate the Captain of Games; a dog called Hervey; Hervey's Spiritual Form; and a most animistically conceived friendly brook. Philip Mason's study[1] may be described as dedicated to the proposition that Kipling was a diversity of creatures too. In the light of it he explores the whole range of Kipling's work with a perceptiveness and thoroughness not, I believe, excelled by any previous critic.

Kipling is reticent about his own make-up. In "The Two-Sided Man" he gives praise to Allah who dowered him with two separate sides to his head—but this merely in the context of his ability to hold Shamans and Calvinists in an equal regard. More significant is his sense, frequently expressed, of dependence in his best writing upon a personal Daemon:

> *This is the doom of the Makers—their Daemon lives in their pen.*
> *If he be absent or sleeping, they are even as other men.*

The persuasion of being intermittently taken command of by a hidden power is not uncommon in artists, but Kipling dwells on it more insistently than one would somehow expect of him had it not been a particularly vivid fact of his experience. Mr Mason distinguishes as a minor theme running right through the short stories "manipulation of events by a hidden figure behind the scenes." It is conceivably the operations of the Daemon that are shadowed in this.

A man is inspired or not inspired: the simple dichotomy enforced itself upon Kipling throughout his working life. "When your Daemon is in charge, do not try to think consciously. Drift, wait and obey." But when the Daemon neglects to come there is still the day's work ahead. So here, for a start, are two Kiplings alternately sitting at the writing-table. The effort of the first (for of course there is effort) is to give substance and form to shadowy deliverances from intuitive regions of the mind. The second gets on with a job partly because he has been brought up among, and admires, men taking it for granted that they must slog away; and partly because, like his Abbot in "The Eye of Allah", he knows that "for pain of the soul there is, outside God's Grace, but one drug; and that is a man's craft, learning, or other helpful motion of his own mind."

There are a good many more Kiplings than these two, and many of them do seem to pair off in what seems at first surprising contradiction one of the other. Thus his work is full of robust violence. The practical jokes he delights in are violent. When his people laugh it is with paroxysmal violence. Yet he was a physically timid man. There is a story that when his early love Flo Garrard finally decided to reject him she maliciously contrived to place him in circumstances of some danger in a rowing-boat, and then declared that she could never marry a man who betrayed naked fear in such a situation. This may be apocryphal, and goes unmentioned by Mr Mason probably for that reason. But there can be only one reading of the occasion in Vermont upon which Kipling scampered off to the police when rudely challenged by his inebriate but not unamiable brother-in-law, Beatty Balestier. And the proletariat frightened Kipling too—which is why his political philosophy scarcely got beyond the conviction that the only safe thing is a firm hand.

There is nothing in this to startle psychology, but other of the self-contradictions are more perplexing. Why, for example, did a man capable of deep compassion and sympathy, who believed that a terrible experience in childhood had drained him of any capacity for personal hate, fill his books with implacable animosities and revenges and retributions? Mr Mason, confront-

[1] *Kipling: The Glass, The Shadow and The Fire.* By Philip Mason. Jonathan Cape, £6.

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"The Most Important Work On American Politics Since Tocqueville's 'Democracy In America' "*

THE BUREAUCRATIC STATE
by H.R. SHAPIRO

Some Comments on the Work of H.R. Shapiro

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The work of H.R. Shapiro goes back to the very foundations of the American Republic. It offers a new approach to political matters which is free of all ideological and party cliches. His discussion and analysis of the daily affairs of public concern has consistently been on a very high level of insight, intelligence, and plain common sense. H.R. Shapiro's work should be read by every independent citizen.

LEWIS MUMFORD
No one who wishes to keep his mind clear can even read a hundredth of the pages of printed paper that assail him daily. But in spite of my reluctance to receive another periodical I found myself pausing over the very first number of [H.R. Shapiro's] *The Public Life*. I approve its . . . fresh approach to matters of public concern now buried under both reactionary and revolutionary cliches.

DWIGHT MACDONALD
[*Education and the Republic* is] an extraordinary article. I agree with H.R. Shapiro's concept of Republican education and I admire the learning with which he has made his cameleopard come alive — and unfabulous. It's good to have such sensible (educational) proposals backed up by so detailed a grasp of American history and education theory, from Jefferson to Arendt.

W.H. AUDEN
H.R. Shapiro should be read by every citizen who is a republican in the true sense of the word, that is to say, someone who cares for the Public Thing and believes it is too important a matter to be handed over to professional politicans.

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H.R. Shapiro's analysis of the foundations of political power in America in *The Bureaucratic State*, based on his discovery of the concept of "two-party collusion" and his studies of party bureaucracy in democracies, should become a fundamental work of American politics. The essay is not only unique — without comparison in our political literature — and profound, but, what is truly remarkable, completely convincing. *The Bureaucratic State* is a political classic — the most important work on American politics since Tocqueville's "Democracy in America."

GEORGE P. ELLIOT
H.R. Shapiro's essay on American education today [*Education and the Republic*] is the best critique of its ills and the origins of those ills that I have read. Moreover, the essay does not leave the reader hopeless, for he suggests a remedy to those ills which involves us all.

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ing this and other paradoxes, lays emphasis on two considerations. The first is that the circumstances of Kipling's upbringing and early life are everywhere to be traced amid these contrarieties and remain with him throughout his career, even sharpening their impact towards the end, when the surface of his mind grows increasingly inert at the same time that its depths are opening to new spiritual experience. It is Mr Mason's second point—made early in his book—that these disparate elements are not merely never reconciled with each other; they are not "even held in a healthy tension within a mature personality."

WE CANNOT DOUBT that much in Kipling's early fortunes conspired to turn out a chip-on-the-shoulder type. His long incarceration in the House of Desolation at Southsea (however much its horrors may be exaggerated in "Baa Baa, Black Sheep") shattered a sense of family security which was very important to him. ("In his most imaginative work," Mr Mason says apropos of Mowgli, "good parents are always foster-parents.") He was sent to an inferior public school, where his defective eyesight prevented his either playing the games upon which prestige depended, or aiming to enter the army as nearly all his school-fellows were doing. So at seventeen he was back in India, the country of his birth, as odd-job boy on a provincial paper—very conscious that his cousin Stanley Baldwin was at Harrow with a university career in front of him. His position was socially anomalous, as was that of his parents, for although Lockwood Kipling's cultivation and Alice Kipling's brilliance gained them the regard of a Viceroy, the one merely ran an art school and curated a museum and the other earned pocket-money by writing up social events for the press. The Kiplings were sahibs only in an equivocal way.

As a consequence of this—Mr Mason insists—we have to view Kipling's life among the British in India as positively retarding his development as an artist. There is created the figure constantly pushing himself where he doesn't really belong, full of defensive self-assertion and knowingness, that we are at least intermittently aware of behind so much of the writing. This Kipling accepts the *ethos* of Anglo-Indian society and the voice of the smoking-room as his own—as when, in his part of the collaborated *The Naulahka,* the indigenous people of India are represented as idle, feckless, superstitious and corrupt. In the first and formative period of his writing he had to court the approval of a public taking such views for granted; his was the dyer's hand; he was obliged to work towards "making something which will hold a superficial reader but will say much more to a careful reader." This comes down to a technique of appealing to different levels in an audience—which is something quite distinct, Mr Mason points out, from "writing from different levels in himself." Sometimes, indeed, he manages to do both at once, as in "The Drums of the Fore and Aft."

But Kipling hated his own alienation; deeply needed a sense of community, of belonging; was in the plight of "a tribesman without a tribe." By 1890, when he was back in London and had a literary world at his feet with a suddenness experienced by no Englishman since Byron, the attitude was ingrained in him. He hated the "long-haired things" with whom he was called upon to associate, and felt all the insecurity of a man not in his own house. Hence his wanderings, the rejection of India, the disastrous American episode; hence, too, the aggressive imperialism, the flag-flapping by a man who could deride flag-flapping as detestable, the over-noisy celebration of the sanctities of rural England. In a sense it is all of a piece with Beatty Balestier's victim, with the man who was easily scared off, who made a burrow of his home and was bossed by his wife—the "concentrated Carrie" of Henry James's foreboding vision.

Pain and loneliness, and an inner insecurity only pointed by a brilliantly successful career, at least led Kipling to a vivid apprehension of certain basic truths of the human situation. One can set up as a landowner, join a Masonic Lodge, versify extreme political attitudes for *The Times*—but all this takes place in a kind of theatre in the round, the lighted stage being encircled on every hand by darkness and the void. The bastions of order are tenuous at the best, and that they secure for us a perpetual playground can be the persuasion only of muddied oafs and flannelled fools. We require an army and navy if we are to meet one or another immediate threat, yet these on a deeper view are only symbols of a surer strength which we must somewhere find if we are to square up to an unregarding universe without and the disruptive force of our own unruly and unredeemed natures within. The spectacle of British India had already shown Kipling this. The early stories, mere yarns though they often be, exhibit in Mr Mason's words "a sense of chaos and breakdown kept at a distance only by the constant effort of man, a feeling of human society as something which in spite of injustice and pretence must be supported, because anarchy is much worse." But India and its need of the ford, the bridge, the fight against famine and disease, are again in a last analysis symbols

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merely, a microcosm of some yet vaster situation which white men and black confront alike.

MR MASON IS NOWHERE better than when discriminating the significance of the children's books for Kipling's development. Into them are carried, indeed, more of the rigidities of his philosophical and political persuasions at the time than Mr Mason perhaps allows for. Discipline, leadership, the Law are a little too insistently proclaimed. Nevertheless in these books—and just when the superficial Kipling of intemperate political diatribe was in danger of taking command—the deeper Kipling, Kipling the fabulist, came securely to birth:

> The children's stories provided a bed in which seeds could germinate and young plants could grow without being clogged or distorted by the rank top-growth of political opinions. They permitted the appearance of a sanity and sweetness which in the last period was again transmuted by pain into compassion.

This is certainly true. In fact the children of the English-speaking world may be said to have served him well—simply as constituting an audience before whom he no longer felt that he had to show off, and for whose benefit he could be "knowing" not in his irritating early manner but on a level of enthralling fantasy.

Yet if in the later 1890s a new Kipling takes the stage the old Kipling is far from bowing himself into the wings. There is something perplexing in his continuing to set side by side with his most mature achievements performances of a crude or puerile order—as when in his last volume, *Limits and Renewals*, the callow little story called "The Tie" immediately precedes the magnificent "The Church that was at Antioch." But then every theme died hard with Kipling. He never, for example, lost his taste for stories turning on elaborate practical jokes. *Limits and Renewals* contains one of these, "Beauty Spots", which Mr Mason is in doubt whether to classify as a farce or a story of revenge. Spots are painted on a pig called Angelique, but what is contrived is pitiless and rather horrible.

Revenge is the dominant theme of the Stalky stories. The three heroes are obsessed by it. Schoolfellows or assistant-masters have strayed from the Law; there is a debt to be paid, a balance to be redressed. The three get a great deal of glorious fun out of their mission, and other satisfactions as well. One story, in which they are left damp and exhausted after subjecting malefactors to a variety of juvenile tortures, is called "The Moral Reformers"—and Beetle (who has gone on longest plying the cricket-stump upon his pinioned victims in sundry ingenious ways) remarks at the end that "This moral suasion biznai takes it out of a chap." It is worth it, all the same. "Everybody paid in full—beautiful feelin'," M'Turk says on a related occasion.

"The Moral Reformers" is an astonishing orgy of sadism, and the irony implicit in its title signals Kipling's awareness that his own compulsive interest in revenge, retribution, punishment and atonement has its questionable side. Nevertheless we read far into his work before meeting with insult or injury unanswered by revenge. Yet he does finally gain other territory, and in his maturest writing wrongs are forgiven, mercy and compassion exhibited, healing declared to be more sovereign than vengeance in a universe where greater hurt comes to us inexplicably and from the nature of things rather than by the deliberate malice of man.

But to the end the old Kipling keeps bobbing up, so that Mr Mason in his final pages has to recur to the view that he was "at least two people in one skin":

> Kipling's inconsistencies seem to me of an order peculiar to themselves. It was not that his public image was inconsistent with his private, but that within his written work there is tolerance and wisdom and compassion side by side with contemptuous dismissal of people he shut out from his consciousness altogether.

Perhaps the limiting factor in Kipling's genius lay in the tenuous relationship borne to one another by the two (or more) people "in one skin." The effect can be like that of a dissociation of personality. From beneath those tremendous eyebrows now one and now another Kipling looks out at us, and at a creative level they refuse to get together in any effort after reconciliation and synthesis. It is surely significant that, apart from the episodic *Kim*, he never wrote successfully at more than short-story length. He was not sufficiently stable or sure of himself in his real identity to build on a large scale, dramatise radical conflicts in conviction and vision within a single imaginative whole. Even in the individual "mature" stories a far from mature Kipling frequently makes himself felt in the tone of the writing—and this quite without artistic calculation or felicitousness. But it is possible—as Mr Mason suggests—that something of his immense popularity was due to this division of personality, "fluid at the centre." His readers, the servants of Empire, had been (as at the United Services College) very drastically "licked into shape." And the shape being obscurely uncomfortable, and not to be maintained without anxiety and strain, they responded to an artist whose deepest conflicts reflected their own.

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Of Birds & Men

Virtues & Vices of Ethologists—By H. J. Eysenck

Dr Thorpe is an ethologist, and the nature of his book is a direct product of this fact—plus the additional one of its commission, to which I shall turn in a minute. The term "ethology" is quite an old one; it was in general use in the late 18th and early 19th century, meaning "the interpretation of character by the study of gesture." It was also taken to refer to "the art of mime."

Recently, ethology has been applied to a new school of animal study, a school which declared that the first and most essential step in the scientific study of the behaviour of any species was to carry out a strictly objective study, or inventory, of the movements or motor patterns in their subjects' repertoire. Most ethologists received their training as zoologists; but they also number psychologists, physiologists, anatomists and other species of biologist among their members. As Thorpe puts it,

> for the twentieth-century pioneers, the word ethology eventually meant the comparative anatomy of gestures; only now it was the gestures of animals, and not the gestures of human beings (or indeed the gestures of actors), which were to be studied and which it was hoped would reveal the true characters of the animals—in the same way as the study of human gestures can reveal the characters of men.

A psychologist might ask here whether it is indeed true that the study of human gestures can reveal anything much about the characters of men; the evidence does not make one optimistic. The success of confidence tricksters, bigamists, and others in using gestures to deceive is too well known to cause one to believe readily in the usefulness of gestures as direct evidence of character.

Thorpe's definition does not include any direct mention of the most essential way in which ethologists differ from psychologists in their approach to the problem of animal behaviour. Ethologists believe in studying behaviour in natural surroundings, using drives, rewards, and problems which the animal might be expected to encounter under natural conditions. Experimental animal psychologists prefer greater control over conditions, and use such "unnatural" devices as Pavlov's conditioning room, the maze which countless rats have had to learn, and the jumping stand in which the animal is trained to jump to a particular sign, rather than another one. For many years, proponents of these two schools have disregarded each other's work, denigrated the other's experiments, and refused to take seriously their results. This has always seemed sad to me, because clearly both have a contribution to make.

It is untrue to say (as many behaviourists have done) that ethologists do not control conditions sufficiently to make their "experiments" acceptable. While this is often true, it need not be, and the best work done by ethologists is of just as high a quality as that done by animal psychologists. It is untrue to say (as many ethologists have done) that the work of the animal psychologists is done under such unnatural conditions that it is meaningless. This, too may be true for some studies, but it is not true overall. The two sides to this controversy simply ask different questions, and use different means to arrive at answers which satisfy them. Both have done valuable work, but that of the ethologists is more in the tradition of observational field work, supplemented by experiment, while that of the psychologist is more in the tradition of theory-oriented, hypothetico-deductive experimentation.

One outcome of this differential orientation is that ethologists have much the better press (and have recently been awarded a number of Nobel prizes). It needs no special training to understand Konrad Lorenz's description of imprinting in geese, or to appreciate the photographs showing him triumphantly leading a train of goslings around a Bavarian meadow. The problems which are being attacked are obvious and need little explanation; and the experiments are equally obvious and intelligible to the layman, with perhaps a little prompting. Anyway, everyone loves newly hatched-out chickens, or goslings, or the wide variety of other animal-ethologists study; there is a built-in audience for this sort of thing. Nobody loves rats, the prime playthings and experimental test-beds of the animal psychologists, and to understand the purpose of his experiment, you would first of all have to understand the theories which he is trying to test and judge; as these are quite complex, and require considerable expertise to relate to the experimental set-up, no layman could hope to follow the argument. The whole endeavour may seem esoteric and of purely academic interest—quite irrelevant to the problems of modern life. This impression

[1] *Animal Nature and Human Nature.* By W. H. Thorpe. Methuen, £7.20.

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is false, but one can easily see how it arose, and why.

Thorpe simply disregards completely all that animal psychologists have done, and he adds insult to injury when he quotes Karl Popper to the effect that behaviourists deny "that a subjective mental world of personal experiences exists." This is the sort of nonsensical statement that makes ordinary, sensible people believe that a behaviourist is some sort of very special, highly qualified nut-case; in fact, what behaviourists say is simply that while such a subjective mental world exists, it is very difficult to study it scientifically, and that the fact that it is private seems to take it out of the scientist's field of objective, replicable observation. Hence the concern of the behaviourist with observable behaviour. Oddly enough, the ethologist makes exactly the same choice in his work, disregarding the subjective world of personal experience and concentrating on what the animal does.

MUCH OF THORPE'S BOOK consists of a fascinating account of what animals in fact do; this is linked with some interesting questions about the nature of the differences between animals and men, between animate and inanimate nature, and other similar problems. Much of the information provided is fascinating, and of intrinsic interest. In talking about animal language, Thorpe deals at length with the birds, as any writer must. But then he goes on to discuss the song of the humpbacked whale. Apparently, this animal has a definite song, similar to that of the wren, in that it contains about 200 notes, but it takes ten minutes to sing and not three seconds as does that of the wren. It has relatively about the same range as the wren, including high-pitched "bleeps" and squeaks and low thunderous roars. "It is also, of course, extremely loud." If you enjoy this sort of information, this is your kind of book. Much of it is completely useless, has no general significance, and appeals to the collector of unconsidered trifles.

While asides of this kind add to the interest of the book, there is of course much more to it than that. The book arose from the Gifford Lectures which the author delivered during 1969–1971 at the University of St Andrews. The will of Lord Gifford instructed the lecturers to deal with natural religion, and to "treat their subject as a strictly natural science, the greatest of all possible sciences. . . ." This instruction is surely little better than nonsense; there is no such science, and there is no obvious possibility of treating "natural religion", whatever that might be, as a science. It is of course possible to study scientifically the spread of religion among men, or the process of religious conversion, or the personality of religious as opposed to irre-

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ligious men; but this was not Lord Gifford's intention. Asking his lecturers to do the impossible, the noble Lord had to accept that their contributions will be bifurcated; there will be a sensible, enjoyable scientific part, and a rather shamefaced, philosophical part attempting to show that the lecturer was all the time hewing to the prescribed syllabus. It is this latter part, dealing with such topics as free will, the nature and limitation of mind, paranormal cognition, and epistemology, that will be unlikely to attract readers with a more factual turn of mind. There is little here that is original, and these topics have been discussed for so many centuries that a moratorium ought really to be declared "to protect the innocent." I will not go on to outline what Dr Thorpe's opinions are; they are reasonable but unexciting, and do not leave orthodoxy far enough behind to make discussion worthwhile.

This is not to suggest that what he does say is not perfectly sensible and for the most part acceptable. Thus he states: "I believe it can be said that, on straightforward grounds of scientific evidence, the existence of some forms of ESP was settled a long time back. . . ." This is still a brave thing to say, given the rather curiously obscurantist views of the scientific establishment (mostly advanced without any detailed knowledge of the experimental literature); whether it is relevant to Thorpe's main theme must be more doubtful. Thorpe is equally right (and equally likely to be shot at, this time by advocates of the permissive society) when he speaks of the pornography of violence. As he points out, "it seems to me that the factors in our society which cause the most ready acceptance of violence, and lead to personal and group violence and perhaps even to the violence of war, are those which glorify violence and at the same time, so to speak, 'sanitize' it without showing its real horror and evil. . . ." Thorpe confesses to having difficulties in making up his mind about sexual pornography: "it may be dangerous and debasing; it may not." But, he goes on to say, "I do feel sure that there is a pornography of violence which constitutes a far greater danger." And he makes the additional point that, "in so far . . . as violence contaminates sexual pornography, it becomes that much more dangerous. And the more it approximates to pure violence, the more dangerous it is." All this is well said, and most of it can be substantiated from experimental work done by psychologists. It is a pity that Thorpe's disregard of such work leads him into stating these points as personal beliefs, rather than quoting some of the empirical evidence.

Thorpe is not always sound; for instance, he quotes Bowlby's work on attachment behaviour in human infants, saying of his statements that "much evidence supports [his] conclusion and none contradicts it." This is simply not true; the recent book by P. Morgan on *Child Care—Sense and Fable* (Temple Smith, 1975), shows in devastating detail how poor the alleged evidence really is, and how much contradictory evidence makes his conclusions untenable. Indeed, the frequent changes of mind characteristic of Bowlby make one wonder what in fact he does maintain; the charitable reader can usually salvage something by disregarding contradictory statements.

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The Viet Nam Connection

New Novels—By CLIVE JORDAN

IN ROBERT STONE'S NOVEL *Dog Soldiers*,[1] two ex-U.S. marines, one a third-rate journalist and the other a psychopathic adventurer, smuggle three kilos of heroin out of Viet Nam and into the United States. They then try to hold on to this hugely valuable merchandise, and their lives, long enough to profit from it, in the face of ruthless opposition from the employees of a sinister "agency." The book has the pace and the violence of a thriller, and a magnificent one at that; but it is a great deal more. In its mastery of contemporary American dialogue, its evocation of dark forces at work in that society, its conscious homage to various American fictional modes, its relevance to public events of the present and recent past, it strikes this British observer as a truly American work of fiction.

It is no accident that the profit motive is one of the driving forces of the action. *Dog Soldiers* is about the kind of connections that Americans could make with Viet Nam. Between the book's publication in the United States and its appearance here, a number of events occurred to underline its relevance. On 5 April this year, America's prototype of a Chinese leader, Chiang Kai-shek, died in Taiwan, having stomached in his last years U.S. rapprochement with Peking. On 30 April Saigon finally fell to the Communists. Just the first sixty pages of *Dog Soldiers* take place in Viet Nam, but they have an intimate relationship with the ensuing action in California and the South-western United States. Only in the context of this kind of America, it may be inferred, can the catastrophic climax to U.S. involvement in East Asia be understood. *Dog Soldiers* is very much about the end of an affair.

One passage in the novel foreshadows this end. In the seedy Hotel Coligni in Saigon, the American journalist Converse reads a letter in which his wife in California amateurishly agrees to accept delivery of the heroin. He does so squatting over the hole of a French-style lavatory:

> It was a vestige of the Mission Civilatrice. . . . Often, especially if he were high, using it made him feel as if he were entering into communion with the tight-lipped "durs" of vanished France Ultra Mer—the pilots of Saint-Exupéry, General Salan, Malraux. Sometimes he whistled "Non j'ne regret rien" as he left the toilet.

Exactly how much vanished down that hole in the Hotel Coligni is hinted at variously in the novel. The idealism of the American Christian missions, transferred to Vietnamese soil once China proved not to be "the good earth", is still there for Converse to admire, in the form of a woman missionary he meets on his way to pick up the heroin in Saigon. Yet his response is little more than vague sexual curiosity. The individual sense of adventure, and the will to understand the Orient, are still there too, in Converse's buddy Hicks; but he is a psychopathic disciple of Nietzsche, and his behaviour a perverted, anti-social Zen-influenced "machismo." (Hicks is a strange successor to socially-oriented adventurers such as General "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell, the man who masterminded the American World-War-Two airlift of supplies across "the Hump" from Burma to Chiang Kai-shek, and in his youth reconnoitred among Chinese warlords, one of whom travelled to battle in an armoured train stocked with champagne and White Russian mistresses.) Almost all the characters in *Dog Soldiers* are extreme individualists, but "machismo", the cult of maleness (sometimes considered one of the causes of U.S. escalation in Viet Nam), is inappropriate, in Robert Stone's characters, to the hell of a technological war. Converse's definitive experience was to have been fragmentation-bombed by his own side in Cambodia, after which self-interested fear, rather than any morality, has become his guiding principle. The Viet Nam War always seemed to operate by some law of extremes, and it is appropriate that the legitimised commerce of America's Chinese concessions ends, in this book, in illicit trafficking in "King H"—Oriental opium transformed into Western heroin.

Converse remarks at one point that the Viet Nam War has been exhaustively documented, even by computer. True; yet looking back, the hard-news stories from Viet Nam suffered from an odd sameness, as though the truth had gone into hiding somewhere between the newsreel shots of strafed villages and napalmed children. Only occasionally did a sensitive observer such as Richard West manage to evoke a Viet Nam behind the headlines; indeed West's televised report about an English nurse working among Saigon's child drug-addicts and derelicts, broadcast a month after the end of the war, suggested that even now Westerners have much to learn.

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[1] *Dog Soldiers*. By ROBERT STONE. Secker & Warburg, £3.50.

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The made-up Viet Nam of fiction, which is now beginning to take shape, may well prove more real than the newsman's true Viet Nam. A story by Nguyen Sang (in *Women of the Third World,* Gollancz. £3.50) transforms the rigours of life inside a Viet Cong resistance network into a metaphor for human resilience. Robert Stone the novelist, who covered the war as a reporter, gives us a Viet Nam of the American outsider, in a tone which is suitably brash, knowing, corrupt and, ultimately, baffled.

Part of his achievement is that his use of different fictional modes is successfully contained within the convention of realism. His Viet Nam passages often recall the satirical extremes of Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*: one cameo character, the "Mr Fix-It" Sergeant Janeway dealing with press relations, can only be a lineal descendant of Heller's immortal PFC Wintergreen. The two marines who give Converse a lift at a Vietnamese port have "crazy doper's eyes", and spin him a yarn about porpoises trained to kill girl Viet Cong underwater sappers, which Converse mentally fantasises as "the Battle of My Lat Bay, illustrated by Arthur Rackham." Stone's stoned Viet Nam is close to the pot-smoker's paradise of folk-singer Tom Paxton's "Talking Viet Nam Pot Luck Blues." But fantasy is an appropriate mode to describe such a war. Converse's fictional hotel proprietor, who speaks no English, enjoys U.S. cowboy movies on TV. In real life, ex-Air Force General "Cowboy" Ky, now a refugee in the United States, has been offered John Wayne's help in getting a ranch in the American West.

ONCE BACK STATESIDE, Stone's two drug-runners are involved in a breath-taking chase and flight across California and the South-west. The climax is a set-piece shoot-out in New Mexico near the mountain-top hermitage of a failed pop-religion guru. Converse, the amateur in a pitiless professional underworld, soon finds himself travelling unwillingly with the hunters, operatives of the kind of ambiguously criminal enforcement agency familiar from Watergate America. Hicks hangs on to the heroin and Converse's wife and becomes the hunted, savouring to the full the heroin-spiced moments of test and crisis.

What enables Robert Stone to weld his disparate elements into a stunningly contemporary narrative is principally his grasp of a particular kind of everyday American speech–vivid, vulgar and direct. There is decorum, in the classical sense, in the way the characters speak directly out of the amoral, destructive, selfish world they inhabit, a zone of contact between the different cultures of drugs, on the one hand, and the gangsterism of free enterprise at its most extreme on the other. It is a world utterly devoid of moral certainties. "'Nobody knows', Converse told her confidently. 'That's the principle we were defending over there. That's why we fought the war.' "

COINCIDENTALLY, another recent novel, *The Virtues of Hell* by Pierre Boulle,[2] also deals with heroin trafficking, this time from the "golden triangle" of Upper Burma. Like *Dog Soldiers*, it starts with a prefatory quotation from Joseph Conrad, and its main character has shown cowardice in Viet Nam. There resemblance ends; because Boulle's is an ironic moral tale of the regeneration of an addict due to one overwhelming ambition—the manufacture and delivery of the purest form of heroin in the world. This involves Boulle's hero, Baker, in an unlikely affair with a female official heroin analyst, followed by equally improbable spells at heroin laboratories, first in Indiana and then in the Burmese heartland. Against this simplistic story, with its cardboard characters and wooden dialogue (translated from the French), Robert Stone's achievement stands out in even clearer relief. How he would fare in translation is another matter.

AMERICA'S EXPERIENCE of Viet Nam affects Diane Johnson's novel *The Shadow Knows*[3] only residually, as an atrocity cutting from a newspaper sent anonymously through the post, and as one of the accepted hazards of life in this very different version of California. " 'I would say you are no more likely than anyone else to be knocked off by a crazy maniac, or speeding car, or atomic holocaust, or returned veteran blazing away with a shotgun at supermarket, addict with shiv in subway. . . .' " Thus a friend attempts to reassure N., the suburban divorcée with four children whose obsessive fears of impending murder are nourished by a number of unpleasant incidents at her home: phantom phone calls, obscene matter smeared on the front door, a cat strangled, car tyres slashed, a physical attack on her living-in maid. N. recounts her own story in the form of a diary, a stream of reflection by a woman in a state of mental siege that may at any moment become physical. She is caught up in a paranoid web in which the villains could be almost anyone—her ex-husband Gavvy, her crazy former maid Osella, her best friend, even herself.

[2] *The Virtues of Hell.* By PIERRE BOULLE. Translated by PATRICIA WOLF. Cassell, £3.50.
[3] *The Shadow Knows.* By DIANE JOHNSON. Bodley Head, £2.95.

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The novel is clever and eloquent, though its cluttered detail, its determination to tell everything, obscures and impedes the workings of a powerful imagination. The demotic dialogue which is one of Robert Stone's strengths is present again here, but as part of an inescapable reality which itself contributes to N.'s problems. There is an awareness of popular culture in the title, which refers to the omniscient detective hero of an American radio series who alone knows "what evil lurks in the secret heart of men." But N., like Diane Johnson, is an academic, trying to live a life of the mind at the same time as bringing up her children and coping with the threats, genuine or imagined, which impinge on her reality. Her academic subject has a pattern which conflicts with ill-ordered everyday events, a clash cleverly expressed at times by the juxtaposition of two kinds of language.

> "I sit at my table trying to write the paper. Whether a transformational grammatical solution is applicable to a problem in historical linguistics. . . . Ev is reading in the living room on the sofa with half an eye on the kids."

N.'s mind debates Chomsky while her body does the dishes. The languages of life and learning, in a mass-educated society, diverge.

AND THERE IS ANOTHER linguistic split in the novel, between the language of N.'s ratiocinations and the rude eloquence of her black maids and their friends. It is suggestive of the familiar fictional division between white reason and black instinct. The black Osella knows instinctively how to mourn, while N. has no point of contact with another's open grief. Yet it is part of the author's purpose to hint constantly at a deeper, perhaps darker, suppressed emotional life. N. yearns for a fulfilling affair with her unsatisfactory lover Andrew; husband Gavvy has a compulsion to adopt the foetal position in his own child's cot and is glimpsed—or is he?—sitting childlike on fat Osella's lap; N.'s friend Beth turns out to be consumed with jealousy for her. Diane Johnson's view of the personality leans heavily on Yeats' "foul rag and bone shop of the heart": "it is like being stood in a closet, baffled and fearful, with dark strange-smelling coats stifling you. . . ."

An essential element in N.'s alienation is the fact of being a liberated woman coping alone. We are spared none of the womanly problems, heaped sometimes in double measure, like the moment when, choosing new car tyres at a supermarket, N. experiences a sudden, devastating flux of blood. Femaleness achieves its apotheosis at the end of the book, with gross, ageing, unbalanced Osella singing naked in a nightclub, with admiring Gavvy in the audience. Yet when shadowy menace finally overtakes N.

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in all its undeniable masculinity, her reaction is typically ambiguous.

GILLIAN TINDALL'S NEW NOVEL *The Traveller and His Child*[4] also revolves round an obsession, that of the cameraman Robert Thwaite for a young boy whom he abducts and takes on an aimless car-ride through France. The obsession here, though, is totally explicable in terms of Thwaite's own personality and marital situation—divorced, in youngish middle-age, with his own young son far away with his mother in the United States. Moreover, there is a respectability in this kind of abduction, since the boy knows and likes his abductor as an old college chum of his father's and a close companion in their comfortable North London middle-class clique.

Thwaite is in fact less a Gilles de Rais or even a Humbert Humbert than simply a man deprived of his natural function; in his own explanation, "dying inside of suppressed fatherhood, a little-known disease on which virtually nothing has been written." True, he does have his problems with women, due to his muddled upbringing and sense of guilt over his part in his repressive father's death, which have left him with something feminine in his nature. Yet he awakens none of the curiosity of a personality not driven to extremes, but extreme in itself. So Gillian Tindall has to work hard for her insights, which unlike Diane Johnson's surrealistic glimpses arise directly out of a methodically-established pattern. At one stage the book seems to be concerned with the irrevocable, existential action which defines the individual and makes him, in Sartre's phrase, "*non-récupérable*". If this were so, the well-managed happy ending would have the effect of denying the value of preceding events. But it is made clear that the abduction is less a definition of Thwaite's present than a catalyst to stimulate him into self-knowledge by viewing the past correctly.

The discipline of the writing conceals imagination rather than displays it, but imagination is there, in the convincingly complex portrait of the abducted seven-year-old boy Pippin. Perhaps, indeed, both Pippin and Thwaite gain in interest for the reader by being transferred from their boringly urbane London environment to French soil, "Abroad" has long been a metaphor of escape for the English intellectual, and Gillian

[4] *The Traveller and his Child.* By GILLIAN TINDALL. Hodder & Stoughton, £3.75.

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Tindall's France is gulped by her characters with a greedy passion that suggests that the ordered middle-class life may not be enough after all.

THE HERO of *An Italian Delusion*,[5] the first of five novels by a new writer, is also abroad, though the effect of Oliver Knox's rural Italy is more subtle than bracing—a Campari, say, rather than a strong *vin rouge*. Peter, a mild eccentric given to reading Leopardi to his pet rabbit, is in exile from his family business, ousted by the all-powerful J. D. (a background presence reminiscent of the tycoon in John Osborne's *Hotel in Amsterdam*). There is a sense of distance also about Peter's self-conscious observation of his own personal relationships and physical behaviour. This is partly a time-honoured device for building comedy out of such painfully difficult mechanical operations as eating a chicken or pushing back a chair to stand up. But there may be a suggestion also that such objectivity precludes morality, and that Peter, revealed at the end as a cheated black-mailer as well as an adulterer, is going to get his come-uppance. As it progresses, this elegant, over-refined, palpably English novel moves, through a series of narrative coincidences, towards the serious purpose of Peter's humiliation. If Peter is to reappear in subsequent novels, Oliver Knox's obvious concern for structure demands that this first instalment had best be sipped cautiously, until the complete range of ingredients is known.

THE THREE MAIN CHARACTERS in Gabriel Josipovici's new novel *The Present*[6] are a youngish married couple and their friend from student days, sharing a flat near that same Hampstead Heath where Gillian Tindall's middle-class parents exercise their children. The true topography, though, is the modern European mind, and their ancestors the hospitalised or isolated beings of Samuel Beckett. With its short sequences which chime together like words in a poem, its fragmented narrative, its alternative versions of the characters' relationships, its concern over problems of individual communication and its general air of unhappiness, the novel is recognisably "experimental"—though why more joyous fictions should never claim this title is a puzzle. The ambiguity in the phrase "nothing is happening" is central, and the

[5] *An Italian Delusion*. By OLIVER KNOX. Collins, £2.25.
[6] *The Present*. By GABRIEL JOSIPOVICI. Gollancz, £2.95.

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apparent fate of the characters—the suicide of one, the breakdowns of the others—adds up to a critique of the emptiness of normality. Some of the alternative realities have point: when Alex seems to have married Minna and given her children, instead of her husband Reg, there is a hint of what might have been had love had its way. And the dexterous use of the present tense throughout provides a test of how much of past and future the present can be made to bear. Individual passages have a force and clarity of their own. But the alternatives, which eventually become completely interchangeable, gnaw away at one of the central strengths of fiction, the ability to attain the credibility of life. And life, unlike history, rewrites itself for no one.

Ways of Booming

New Poetry—By DOUGLAS DUNN

WHETHER PETER REDGROVE'S impressive output is ready for the acclaim granted to it by a few critics is a matter for doubt. Philip Hobsbaum, for instance, considers Redgrove *the* talent of the times. One is left wondering what he means by the "times." Certainly not the times we live in now. For it is a matter of fact that Redgrove's vision is unfashionable; and fashion is a more or less serious concept, providing a token at least of what the Zeitgeist will encourage us to admire, even when a more detached, less topically informed discrimination will encourage us to admire something else entirely.

Implicit in Redgrove's work is an assertion, paralleled by lots of other tendentious assertions in lots of other poetry, that his poetic, his idea of what poetry is, runs thoroughly and without compromise against the grain. At the heart of his endeavour is the idea that poetry should see beyond science to natural laws and forces, a provision of natural energies, which men exploit without due reverence. Men lose touch with the elemental fundament, and with a capacity for sensuous apprehension of the world. Redgrove's poems are about that reverence, and his salvation through the effort of holding on to it. There is a sense, virtually of worship, for principles of life and nature which, once "discovered" and harnessed, assumed the status of "man-made" and hence became, through the hubris of knowledge, ignored or at least relegated to the category of "known."

I've said that such a meaning must be unfashionable. The reason is obvious. Were Redgrove's meanings to prevail we would be living in a different world. Society is based on the contradiction of Redgrove's beliefs. Personally, I admit to a certain suspicion of poetry too eager to assume the majesties of natural insight. It can be worked up to such a pitch of profundity that it appears more than celebration of the natural world—a claim, on the poet's part, that *he* knows all the secrets. Peter Redgrove may well see himself as being in that game. If he does, it is, I fear, a vanity which, like all the vanities in the immense granary of poets' vanities, is likely to be no more than the overstatement of his beliefs to himself, and the shining of his own sun on his possible harvests. A move like this is probably necessary. The crop must be gathered.

FROM THE VERY BEGINNING Redgrove has proved his own passionate statements by the sheer strength of his language. Poems, after all, are made of words. We are left to answer D. J. Enright's question, "But what are words made of?", through our own beliefs, our conviction in whatever meanings we are obliged to make. Redgrove's words are usually very good words. His poems are cunningly made. His mastery of several types of poem should leave us in no doubt that, for him, and probably for the rest of us, his meanings and beliefs are productive. They must be: they generate good poems. His belief in the sensuous understanding of life leads naturally enough to a sensuous understanding and practice of language.

The first poem in *Sons of my Skin*,[1] "Anniversaire Triste", presumably written in the early 1950s, has the lines

> *Grinning with grilles, Samurai armour stands*
> *Booming a little with the afterlife.*

There was, I think, little of that control and intensely composed *sound* to be seen together in many poems of the 1950s. But what I have called "sensuous language" is more than alliteration, open vowels and a few sibilants in close company.

[1] *Sons of my Skin: Selected Poems, 1954–1974.* By PETER REDGROVE. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3.95, paper £1.75.

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The second line from "Anniversaire Triste" which I've quoted possesses that quality of imaginative risk which distinguishes Redgrove's work. It's a question not of knowing *exactly* what the line means, but of accepting it. In the line which follows, from "More Voices", a series in his second book, *The Nature of Cold Weather*, sensuousness is in the exciting reproduction of a state of feeling, in this case of sweating (Redgrove is excited by these ordinary human occasions)—

> *It's hot;*
> *The land stands paddling in its sweat;*
> *And my sweat dries firm.*

Even if his poetry does attempt to re-conjure what for us is now an almost unspecifiable dimension of existence, that colourful ordinariness, domestic peculiarity, rescues him from a vain magic-mongering or cranky magicianship. His poems look far more like an attempt to organise experience by sensation and vision.

Redgrove is one of the very few contemporary poets who actually blazes at his readers. The wrenching up of images from the psyche, the turbulence of creativity visible in his poems, is matched only by Sylvia Plath's or Ted Hughes' work. It has that galvanic strength, sometimes even a similarity of phrase and cadence. Redgrove, however, is more masterly a dramatist, as, for example, in "The Widower" and "The Heir." But despite the thunder of sheer *performance* in such poems as "Dr Faust's Sea-Spiral Spirit", or "The Idea of Entropy at Maenporth Beach", the impression is not one of bravura. What we confront is the sight of imagination allowed to work, on its own principles, to capacity, to a fullness of utterance, and not to impress but to achieve a necessary condition of expression. That, we may feel, is to be expected of any poet. Sadly, while it may be what we expect, it is not always what we get; some modes of contemporary poetry do include quite distinct inhibitions that prevent the release of imagination to anything like the fullness of its identity. Styles of writing too self-consciously classical, too self-bent after clarity and metrical neatness, for instance; or ideas of poetry that follow the contours of autobiography too closely, without the generosity of a little dramatic invention; or poetries which mistake nonsense and obscurity for the imaginative. . . .

YET IT IS PROBLEMATIC if Redgrove's work is of general use here. He too can leap into the obscure, or the tirelessly difficult; an unmistakable quality of language, however, is almost always sustained, so it may be that these passages are simply what I personally am unable to understand, never having had much inclination to study the arcana Redgrove has obviously spent many hours poring over. But he can sound like Walter de la Mare written by Dionysos: a dark, sinister sexuality, some wildly irresponsible libido, lurks in the dark rooms or leafy foliage of his poems. There is a slight taint of a withdrawal, of a deranged withdrawal, into strange worlds of his own devising, or the devisings of ancient lore; and such departures, in my view, are generally insults to the realities, more topical than elemental, which must also be honoured, or, if that is impossible, acknowledged; and if acknowledgment of them is not possible, then a gesture which insists they be changed must be made.

What could be damaging to Redgrove at this stage of his writing—now that a substantial selection of his five books of poems is available—is the view of him as a licensed visionary by those who, whether they know it or not, or whether they like it or not, are opposed to his vision, which is, after all, the substance of his poems. I find myself a willing reader of his poems. Yet, because he goes further than I can go in acknowledging, or re-inventing, the supernatural, I find myself *tolerating* his poems. Who wants to "tolerate" a poet of undoubted talent merely because he is ideologically opposed to what his work represents? That I should ask this question may be no more than a measure of my own intellectual confusion. But I think not. It is more

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likely to be just another of those many indications which suggests contemporary poetry has no unity and that there are too many poetic ideologies, "life-ideologies", and political ideologies for that to be possible.

Imagination has several ways of functioning as an intermediary between people and nature, people and society, people and what the imagination itself suggests should concern them. This social-democratic role of imagination is a belief I would almost care to assert as dogma. It is a useful belief: it may even be a tactic. But it withholds the half-hearted mechanism of "tolerance." For the truth may be that poetry suggests a stranger harmony between what can be sensed of nature, and what can be known of society, than, for reasons too topical and too much with us, we are ever likely to allow.

JAMES REEVES' *Collected Poems*[2] is an interesting book. However, I think it possible I misread the interest in terms of both Reeves' career and practice, and the decay in this century of the principles on which he has founded his writing. The book covers the period from 1929–1974: Reeves' writing, therefore, is virtually parallel to Auden's.

His seriousness is borrowed from an English lyric manner—Clare, Hardy, etc.—and in the earlier poems appears so entrenched in its rightness as never to have felt much responsibility towards at least *attempting* an understanding of modernism. As I'm unfamiliar with Reeves' earlier books, I don't know just how drastically he has reduced his output for the purpose of his second *Collected Poems:* however, he appears to have been a great deal less productive than those who, like Auden and MacNeice, flourished in the same period of time. "Greenhallows" is perhaps the best of the earlier poems—but his convincing reconstruction of a house of his obsessions is cruelly destroyed by an intrusive particularity: it turns out to be a dream of an asylum, which cheapens the poem. Elsewhere in his second collection, *The Imprisoned Sea* (1949), a moral chattiness is introduced—

Curious how something quaint and long discarded
Revives a rapture you had thought forgotten.

and,

Never ask questions walking on a lawn.

By his third book, this assertive tendency—common enough in poetry, but in Reeves part of what I suppose will have to be called a "development"—begins to grow into satire of a mixed but clever kind. His poems become more social, harder, tougher, less generally lyrical and soft of wit. "Primadonna" is the best example. It begins so well it takes a single reading to memorise it:

Age cannot wither her, for youth has done it;
But the vicissitudes of mortal progress
May yet transform a bitch into an ogress.

Reeves manages the off-hand incisiveness to continue for another eight verses. It is almost as if, by the 1950s, he had decided that if the modulated English lyre would not be listened to, then something a shade fiercer from the English repertoire would have to be brought to bear against the taste of the age.

Yet if Reeves' managing of the lyric manner in his earlier work is anything to go by, it should be unsurprising that it fell into its lamented decline. Its swooning correctitudes may have given Reeves, and those like him, the illusion of authority, of traditional rightness. Unfortunately, the style no longer fitted the facts of the nature it expressed. It became a technique for prettifying lines, and was no longer capable of the expression with which poets such as Hardy could cram it.

By *The Talking Skull* (1958) both Reeves' cynicism and lyric sadness were flourishing. "Miranda" is an example of the former:

Our revels now are ended. While you can
Enjoy her, Ferdinand. She will be true,
So long as you remain the only man.
In Naples she will learn a thing or two.

Both are expressed together in "On a Poet"—

Having no Celtic bombast in his blood,
Nor dipsomaniac rage, nor very much
To give his time of what his time expected,
He saw his Muse, slight thing, by most neglected.

The poet is Edmund Blunden. Some sort of subjective association appears to be going on as well, though. Indeed, Reeves has been a poet easy to neglect, and perhaps it has been easy for

[2] *Collected Poems, 1929–1974.* By JAMES REEVES. Heinemann Educational, £4.00.

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him to see his own neglect as part of the general disfavour shown towards the manner he has obviously considered hallowed and English.

A ROMANTIC EXTREMISM has haunted James Reeves, yet he has never lived up to it in his writing. At the end of his meditation on the life of John Clare, he asks him to answer the question, "Is poetry a punishment or a crime?" To ask the question probably called for Reeves' belief in his own poetic worth, which he may have seen discarded by the critics about whom he writes later on with terse savagery. Reeves certainly appears, then, as a poet who got himself into a mess by holding on to a sense of tradition which had largely been vaporised by Eliot and Pound.

As an attacker of cant and humbug, though, I doubt if he can be much faulted—"Poetry Festival" is a good example. Satire, however, demands a programmatic approach: of all kinds of verse it is the most self-conscious. Reeves, perhaps too much exacerbated by what he observed going on around him in an atmosphere of slapdash praise and semi-literate eulogy, has never managed the proper scale of satire which, to be convincing, has to be as large as it is destructive. The "Improvisations" in *The Questioning Tiger* (1964) or "Bagatelles" in his most recent collection *Poems and Paraphrases* (1972) are neat, and his epigrammatic wit as admirable as William Plomer's or Geoffrey Grigson's or Peter Porter's. But they are too short. The potential of his satirical vision has never been realised. If, indeed, he has been fighting back against the "corrupt music" of his age, he has been a nifty footworker but a short-winded pugilist.

REDGROVE'S STRENGTHS have been hewn from the darker rhetoric of Shakespeare, from the finest examples in the language of poetry confronting the mysteries of life and intellect. Reeves on the other hand, while he has many poems convincingly suggestive of those mysteries, opted for the more recent traditions of romanticism and for a style which soothed the mysteries of turbulences lived and perceived. Reeves glides, whereas Redgrove leaps off the edges of existence. Yet there is nothing avant-garde about Redgrove. Indeed, the purpose behind his poetry is to recreate the natural man uninhibited in sight of the gods and spirits and mythologies imparted by nature and by intellect in harmony with it. In other words, he seeks to reconnect poetry with a philosophy of life which he sees as permanent. If there is something of this in Reeves' poetry, it was mismanaged by a style, a smoothening lyricism, which discredited what he was attempting to express. And yet

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Reeves' dilemma is instructive and symptomatic: poetry, in the 20th century, is and has been, as Valéry claimed, "the most difficult of all the arts." "What should we write, and how should we write it?" are questions only answered by practice, and the taking of risks.

CHRISTOPHER MIDDLETON'S work shows yet another way of reflecting the self-conscious seriousness of art and poetry. His new book *The Lonely Suppers of W. V. Balloon*[3] is his best yet. He has also been one of the most scrupulous of British poets involved in following the innovations of modernism. Indeed his work strikes me as having derived itself from modern painting as much as poetry. Imagination is used as an instrument for the precise measurement of observations and experience. Forms of writing are austerely devised to allow imagination its exits from mind and poem without distorting the accuracy of pictures and sensations as these are presented. His concentration is almost painterly in poems like "A Cart with Apples." Yet his rapport with nature is as obvious as that in Redgrove's work. The difference is that Middleton apparently considers it a moral responsibility to present sensations as much as possible in their own terms. He writes of nature as-it-is instead of as-it-is-significant.

Middleton's nature is more attractive to me for that reason. But while he is inventive, and, in his new book, productive—he gives us a generous 103 pages—the sheer relish and exuberance of language engagingly and visibly present in Redgrove's poems simply is not there to anything like the same degree. Something constrictingly intellectual, I suggest, prevents that. Indeed, that is the hallmark of the deliberating, over-deliberating, modernist poet. When he celebrates, for example, he holds back, "lest I let out a whoop of joy." The poem "Curling Form for Olga Korbut" continues—

for in fact I exalt a space ripening and continuous
very rare under these rooftops
naming some elements I hoard a little of it
hoarding it I alter a little
the time I have taken the continuous time I stole
to be writing about it

"Le nu provençal", another celebratory poem, begins

The wooden shutter hanging open,
sunlight commands the shapes around the room.
A jug has left its ovals on a flagstone,
and tilts a little, as if listening in
to a kneecap or a buttock

which illustrates what I meant earlier by accuracy through the use of imagination. The lines have their own tilt of surprise and charm. Middleton recreates the photograph on which the poem is based, specifying almost invisibly a sort of "point of view", a conclusion about what has been seen which is not *exactly* a conclusion but left open to our own experience. That Middleton is able to use objects in this way, cleverly, but with no obtrusive gimmickry, suggests that he is a poet of considerable importance—an avant-garde poet we can actually *read*. I look forward to *his* selected poems, and suggest to his publisher it's time such a book was available.

[3] *The Lonely Suppers of W. V. Balloon.* By CHRISTOPHER MIDDLETON. Carcanet Press, £2.75, paper £1.25.

Last Touch

One finger crossing my palm—
I hold you there. . . .

This is our last touch
before sleep, a small weight's

heavy promise, flesh-tip
bedded in loss.

When it leaves,
your absence presses home.

John Mole

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Thinking about Hitler

By Joachim Fest

AS A RESULT OF a number of book publications of varying weight, as well as certain products of the entertainment industry, people have for some time been speaking of "a Hitler wave." Many even talk of a Hitler nostalgia. An American newspaper recently called my book the crest of this wave, and others have accused me of collaborating with my publishers in a carefully planned, long-term strategy that brought it all about, with the result that I am now the beneficiary.

If only it were so easy to arouse historical interest! But in actual fact there is no truth in this whatever. The events leading up to the writing of my book were very simple. About ten years ago a U.S. publisher asked me if I would be prepared to write a biography of Hitler. I was not. I had just published a book bearing the title *The Face of the Third Reich*, which also contained a fairly comprehensive chapter on Hitler. I had simply had enough of the subject, the Nazi cast of characters, and not least of Hitler the man. More important still was the fact that I had no new perspectives, no new questions to ask, and it went against the grain to present over again, merely in more extended form, a subject I had just dealt with.

Nevertheless, it was because of this enquiry that I continued to be preoccupied with the subject and, finally, did one day decide to write the book. I did so, I must add, in opposition to my German publisher's scepticism. He anticipated a possible intellectual success, but certainly not a commercial one. In Germany at that time there was no widespread interest in Hitler, the Nazi régime, the War, and the misfortunes inevitably connected with these subjects. Those who had lived through all this and had not forgotten their own moral failings, their mistakes and their sufferings did not want to be reminded of them. This is understandable; it was a perfectly comprehensible psychological reaction. (At that time my publisher did not dare to dream of the sales figures the book has meanwhile reached in Germany and also in France.)

These figures themselves have lent support to the thesis of the so-called *Hitler Welle* or Hitler nostalgia. But interest and longing must not be equated. If there ever was a Hitler nostalgia, it existed rather in the early 1950s, when those who had served Hitler's régime in one way or another looked back at the past: German officers who in the end had failed to win their final victories; high civil servants who "knew nothing" and therefore bore no responsibility at all; officials who had merely been "doing their duty", and so on down to the valets, chauffeurs, and various simple people who, as we know, constituted Hitler's favourite political environment from the outset. They all remembered those turbulent years that had brought them adventure and contact with history (or with the dustbin of history) and there were undertones of longing in their memories. But this post-War German longing was always restricted to a minority.

WHAT HAPPENED, AND TO SOME EXTENT is still happening, is almost the very opposite: a Hitler repression. Even in today's talk about a Hitler wave this fact comes to light, as though in a distorted echo. Anyone who merely compares the number of publications about historical figures who have had similar earth-shaking effects will immediately note a blatant discrepancy: there are hundreds or even thousands of studies of Frederick the Great, Napoleon, Bismarck, and Lenin—as compared with two or three dozen books on Hitler.

The *Verdrängung* I am speaking of, however, is not expressed solely quantitatively in the small number of Hitler biographies. For a long time the very nature of the biographical presentation was also determined by the need to repress. Two sorts of portrait predominated, particularly in the initial phase. The first sought to demonise the man, to transform him into a kind of "beast from the abyss", an apocalyptic monster. The other was aimed at reducing him to the level of

A LONG CRITIQUE *by Golo Mann, "Hitler—for the Last Time?", appeared in the June 1974* ENCOUNTER. *Joachim Fest's biography of Hitler was published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson (London) and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich (New York), and his essay on Hitler appeared in the October 1973* ENCOUNTER.

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the ridiculous. Hitler then appeared as a *Teppichfresser*, a carpet-chewer, a Chaplinesque caricature or simply as a maniac.

This dual pattern of interpretation, which occasionally occurred in one and the same study, corresponded to the curiously ambivalent nature of people's feelings about Hitler. For his contemporaries (in Germany as in many other parts of the world) had been convinced, coerced, or defeated by him and yet had simultaneously despised him, had despised his mean, heartless, dirty characteristics. He was the "most vulgar little cur" any one could ever meet, as Neville Chamberlain once put it. In this apparently paradoxical intermingling of demonisation and disparagement, his contemporaries could look upon Hitler as simultaneously invincible ("Who could have resisted him?") and contemptible. He was a real devil even if he emerged from a rather vulgar precinct, hell. Naturally a part was also played in such interpretations from the immediate post-War period by horror at those events. Their whole monstrous extent had just become known and surpassed anything that had ever happened before in history. The demonisation of Hitler was also an attempt to deny him humanity, to prevent the noble image of *homo sapiens* from being corrupted by this one man and his crimes. On the other, the subjective side, however, we can also certainly discern a striving—it was perhaps unconscious—to justify one's own moral failure, to explain away the numerous overt or covert compromises entered into with this man by oneself or so many others.

THERE WAS (and is) a further form of repression. It is the most subtle and probably the most frequent: and it is curiously expressed in an overemphasis on the moral aspect. Here Hitler and National Socialism become purely the objects of ever-renewed indignation, ever-renewed expressions of disgust. To avoid all misunderstanding, I will at once stress how understandable this evaluation is. It is doubly understandable and justified in all those directly affected by Hitler's crimes. It is also necessary, so that in a time of moral confusion such as Hitler brought about, moral standards—the sense of right and wrong, of good and evil—may be restored to their proper place. But looked at in the long run, it also contains an important element of refusal to face facts. It cannot be sufficient to regard Hitler as evil; at least it cannot be sufficient if we are to set up meaningful defences against phenomena such as him or that which made him possible. Isn't mere emotion (in so far as it does not rest upon knowledge) always reversible?

I remember my father. He was one of the politically persecuted during those years. After he had succeeded (more or less) in surviving that period, he was no longer willing to take thought and make a rational analysis of National Socialism. He was content with disgust. To direct an intellectual effort to such a gutter phenomenon seemed to him like treachery of the human spirit. He would have nothing to do with it. To him (and to many with his experiences, with his bitterness and courage), Hitler was and is a kind of "anti-myth" that should be left to crumble away in the dreariness and mindlessness appropriate to it, like a sinister horrifying statue from another age.

IT IS OBVIOUS that this viewpoint, though understandable, is not helpful. Not least, it contains an element of defeatist doubt about reason itself. Perhaps this doubt should not be too lightly dismissed in the light of a generation that experienced both Hitler's triumph and its own defeat as the tragic powerlessness of reason. For logic, arguments, and intelligent explanations had achieved little or nothing with the panic-stricken masses during the crisis years of 1929 to 1933. Such experiences are unforgettable. But they are experiences that are not passed on, that cannot be passed on. Each new generation will confront the problem afresh and seek its own different approach.

This approach, it seems to me, must be colder, less emotional than has been the case up to now. A new German and European generation with almost no personal experience of Hitler, or only an indirect experience, will regard him and the behaviour of his contemporaries—their weakness, courage, corruptability, or fear—with other, more dispassionate eyes. The events that for so many were bound up with central questions of their personal lives, with feelings of shame on the one hand,

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with dramatically emotional memories on the other, are beginning to become historical. For the first time it is possible in Germany to advance from emotional commitment to rational analysis. This, for example, is why I devoted more space to the question of how Hitler's hatred of the Jews came into being and how he turned this emotional attitude into a demagogic weapon than to a recent comprehensive description of the manner in which mass murder was carried out in the East. Does this do injustice to the victims? I have sometimes been accused of it. On the contrary, so long as man asks questions and demands reasons —and seeks ideological justifications even for crime—it is advisable to place more trust in the intellectual argument than in the moral. I, at any rate, found it more useful to demonstrate processes, to analyse criminal developments and tendencies, than to describe the crime itself—for such descriptions lead to no effective enlightenment. On the contrary, they always have in them some of the fascination of evil, of the absolutely base which they are ostensibly incriminating. For years many well-meaning writers have borrowed a glimmer of this sinister lustre in order to conceal their intellectual weakness in the sphere of rational interpretation.

THE NEW APPROACH also leaves no doubt that Hitler was, morally speaking, a criminal. But this is precisely what makes so deeply disquieting the question of how he was able to win over (or at least render subservient to his purposes) first the Germans and then a considerable part of the world. In order to document this I will—for a change—not point merely to the masses whose jubilation provides such a cheap and pleasant sense of superiority for those who do not belong to them. There was a whole host of impressed pilgrims, many of them who began coolly but then, in far too many cases, applauded: the politicians of the Weimar Republic to start with, and then the endless line of all the Simons and Edens, the François-Poncets and Toynbees, the Becks, Phippses and Daladiers, not forgetting Mussolini, who finally succumbed to the once-despised epigone Hitler to the point of total self-sacrifice. And let us not forget the high society of noble Florence, which started out in such an ironic mood but after a short visit gave the guest "their minds and their hearts" (as Count Ciano wrote); or those filmgoers in a London cinema who in autumn 1933, after Germany had left the League of Nations, burst into loud applause when Hitler appeared on the screen.

ALL PREVIOUS INTERPRETATIONS of the man have started from the premise, expressed or not, that Hitler was the great Adversary of his Epoch; and that the epoch (at least outside Germany) knew it. Certainly the situation can be seen in this way, if one narrows one's vision somewhat. The signs of the epoch seemed to be pointing not least towards growing self-determination, towards freedom, understanding between nations, and humane progress—towards tendencies, that is to say, against which Hitler stands out as a fantastic and singularly absurd phenomenon. And yet there is no escaping the question of whether he was not at the same time the representative of powerful trends and tendencies of our times. Not merely of powerful tendencies in Germany, but of forces which, above and beyond all frontiers, formed part of the character of the age itself—the need, to name a few factors briefly, for security, or at least for a firm sense of social belongingness; for great men; for pomp and pathos; for great experiences of collective identification; for intoxication, or for that spirit of adventure for which modern welfare states leave so little room.

These, if I think back, were the first questions and considerations that rendered the subject problematic for me in a new way. They are, I now believe, some of the questions that every biographer of Hitler must answer, even if little weight has been given to them in the previous literature on this man. Even in Sir Alan Bullock's famous biography, which remained for many years unsurpassed, such questions were raised only very peripherally, if at all.

Alan Bullock answered the decisive question that confronts every biographer—the question of the dominant impulse in a life—by reference to Hitler's lust for power. If we eliminate all trimmings, all ideological masquerades, we are faced with a *Wille zur Macht* that knew and desired only itself. Seen in this light, Hitler appeared as the prototype of the man of naked power, and the Oxford historian interpreted his hero's personal drabness and lack of personality as the result of the lust for power that overlaid everything and dried out every trace of human substance.

This interpretation is illuminating in many respects. As is well known, it is based not least upon Herman Rauschning's book *The Revolution of Nihilism.* Here Hitler and the National Socialists are defined as revolutionaries without ideological aims, men who had no cause of their own but merely used ideologies for a single purpose: the attainment, preservation and increase of personal power. This thesis has in its favour, above all, the fact that without an extreme manic lust for power Hitler is indeed inconceivable.

But is this really all? Does it not leave too many of his behaviour patterns entirely unexplained

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if we give such absolute value to Hitler's *Machtlust*? Is it possible to establish a rational connection between this idea and his speeches, *Mein Kampf*, the *Zweites Buch*, the *Tischgespräche*, or the jottings from the spring of 1945? Are these really the utterances of a cynical Machiavellian or, rather, of a character wildly caught up in countless prejudices, resentments and fears?

It was Hugh Trevor-Roper who, in the late 1950s, struck the first and no doubt final blow against the thesis of Hitler's exclusive lust for power. A lecture which he gave in Munich at that time on "Hitler's War Aims" first presented the man as a politician fixated in and guided by ideological considerations: as a man whose frenzy, cruelty and inhumanity sprang not so much from a monstrous *Wille zur Macht* as from the certainties of a closed view of the world. Since then many works, most recently Eberhard Jäckel's book *Hitlers Weltanschauung*, have developed and documented this idea.

The theory of Hitler's mere lust for power was also put in question from another angle. It is obvious that this thesis conjures up the image of the great individual who determines the course of history according to his own whim. This gives all historic events a strongly subjective character, making them dependent upon a single person and his moods.

BUT WAS HITLER MERELY the expression of his own craving for power? Does this adequately explain him? Nor is the theory rendered much more plausible by its extension (before and since Bullock) to include the lust for power of a whole people, the Germans, with their particular tradition and their peculiar psychology. For there were phenomena similar to National Socialism in many other European countries with different traditions, a different psychology, and a different historical background. Were there, we must ask ourselves, factors common to all of them? what were they? what were the differences? Could National Socialism be regarded as a particular form of that militant defensive reaction expressed by the rather inexact term "Fascism"? And did it, apart from this, have unmistakably German characteristics? Finally (and here we come to the nub of the matter) what was Hitler's personal contribution to it? What were his motives and where did they come from? Are these events, ultimately, comprehensible even without Hitler?

I CAN, of course, do no more than suggest the answers demanded by this broad complex of questions. To put it briefly, it seems to me that the central *motif* both in Hitler's life and in the life of the masses that followed him was fear. On the individual plane, this element is already evident in the young Hitler. Vague as were the terms in which his political commitment was expressed, dull and inarticulate as was his person as a whole, he was manifestly in the grip of *Angst* from an early age. He never shook it off. First it was the German-Austrian's fear of being racially overwhelmed; then later (in the Vienna of the turn-of-the-century) the fear of the son of a middle-class family of falling in the social scale. But it was also the fear arising out of the general social upheaval, the most visible aspect of which is summed up in the expression "the Industrial Revolution": the fear of a new and alien era heralded by an all-embracing process of emancipation.

Similar motivations of fear are to be observed later, after World War I, in the petty bourgeois masses, who likewise felt threatened by descent down the social ladder, while the latent feeling of living in an epoch of great crises was graphically confirmed by the sight of the Revolution which, starting from Moscow, sought to conquer first Germany, then the world. This seemed to many like the terrible harbinger of that new age against which all their energies rebelled.

Hitler's success rested not least upon his ability, with great rhetorical talents, to make himself the spokesman of these fears and to convert the mood of panic into aggression, or at least into a feeling of strength. He claimed to know the means of salvation, the road to a recovery of honour, the stimulants of greatness. Thus, gradually—after some hesitation as to whether he, the son of a customs official, who till then had been the mere victim of circumstances, had really been chosen by Destiny—he grew into the role of the *Retter*, the "saviour." We can determine pretty exactly what brought about the breakthrough of this newly developing self-confidence. It was the experience he gained (at the age of almost thirty-five), on the occasion of the *putsch* of November 1923, of the weakness and cowardice of the old ruling classes. From this moment on he identified himself totally with this role. It gave him solemnity, pathos, impatience. It was the essential impulse of his life, the force that drove him on and that still governed him during the weeks and days of his downfall in ruined Berlin. It corresponded like a magic formula to the equation of his personality: first fear, then the need for theatricality and his will to power; and it also enabled him to give an air of consecration to his cold brutality through the implication of a lofty motive.

And if, in addition to this, there was another dominant motive in Hitler's life it was the tendency to destruction. This was directed first against everything he hated, in particular against

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the bourgeois world with its strictness, its morality, its earnestness—the world on which he had come to grief and which had so brusquely rejected him, its stammering admirer. He never forgot this early disillusionment; it can be followed right down to the *Table Talk*. But then, far beyond all personal resentments, there was also a fascination with great catastrophic collapses, and from this his pessimistic temperament derived a deep satisfaction. This is the moment to point out what I believe to have been the profoundly important role played by Richard Wagner. As a musician, but also as a politicising writer and simply as a personality, he was (in my view) incomparably the greatest influence in Hitler's intellectual development. And you know how much the great composer's work is peopled on the one hand by a whole range of bringers of salvation, of rescuers and knights in shining armour, while on the other it is full of a Germanic end-of-the-world mood, and how fully he yielded to the intoxication of catastrophe, yearning for the twilight of the gods.

THIS, SO FAR AS SUCH PHASES can be differentiated at all, was the second stage in the approach to the subject, a stage no longer characterised solely by questions but by the provision of answers, at least in initial outline. But, after this, other and more fundamental objections began to be raised.

First there was the claim, widely asserted today, that biographies are no longer possible, or (to be more exact) are no longer essential to the understanding of an age. Two main reasons are usually given. The first is that no single individual can authentically bring out the latent qualities of an epoch, the conflicting web of interests, of political, social, and economic forces. All statesmen are merely the agents of social forces and conditions. The second objection states that every biography—but especially a biography of Hitler—stands consciously or unconsciously in the service of a comprehensive strategy of exculpation. Its point of departure—that men make history—concentrates all the guilt on one man and consequently exonerates the mass of followers, yes-men, and corrupt fellow-travellers.

There is certainly some truth in these objections. Thus there can be no denying that the role of the individual in the historical process is growing increasingly weaker. There are many reasons for this, which I cannot go into here. But if men do not (or do not to the same extent) make history as in older more primitive times, this one man, this Hitler, made more history than others. Everything typical of National Socialism, everything that distinguishes it from other Fascist movements, is unthinkable without Hitler. If you imagine him removed from these events you are left with something different in principle. The events would be immediately deprived of Hitler's special contribution: the dynamism and the immense energy which he lent to everything, as well as—from the moral viewpoint—the new and unprecedented dimension of barbarism. Without him National Socialism, according to every legitimate conjecture, would not even have become a movement of the same importance as Italian Fascism. It would rather, have remained a secondary force, led by a Ludendorff or a Gregor Strasser, full of internal conflicts, split into hostile factions in the manner of all extremist political groups; in any case a phenomenon on the periphery of politics, no more.

As to the second objection, if individuals cannot give authentic expression to an age, this individual nevertheless gave more expression to it than all his rivals. Who would say that Hugenberg or Brüning, Otto Wels or Rudolph Breitscheid were more representative of their time, to say nothing of the Communist leader, Ernst Thälmann? Nowadays, when we see old films showing the *Reichspartei* rallies, the presentation of the colours, the marching columns and the raised hands, when we watch this almost indescribable mixture of pathos and hysteria, many of us feel that we are looking at a rather ridiculous and anachronistic ritual. But the age, or at least a great part of those living in it, recognised itself in this ritual. And if many of these people, when the whole nightmare was over, claimed in excuse that they had been misled by Hitler, then he misled them by means of something that had long existed within them. To this extent Hitler was synchronous with his epoch. One of the most difficult problems confronting the biographer is precisely to determine this mutual interaction between the spirit of the age and Hitler, to define the relationship in which they stood to one another.

CLOSELY LINKED WITH THIS is the question of Hitler's modernity. We know that he was attached to the 19th century in a profound, almost narcoticised manner: the thought-patterns, fixations, fears and resentments of that era were also his. But clearly this does not tell us all there is to know about him.

As a mere anachronism Hitler would even then have chiefly aroused laughter. The masses do not follow mummies; Hugenberg or Papen found this out in their own way, and paid for it politically. Hence anyone who describes Hitler as merely backward-looking, as "reactionary", is overlooking important features in the image of this man. The question is, rather, whether he was not—especially in his methods—a 20th-century man; perhaps even a vanguard figure from the

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arsenal of the pessimistic Utopias of Zamyatin or Orwell. In Germany, in any case, he destroyed numerous outdated structures, did away with old classes, smashed to pieces revered petrifacts. To be sure, the modernity which he thereby created, or prepared the way for, did not correspond to the image of his inner wishes. Apart from classical antiquity, he loved only the 19th century, including its idyllic, pastoral, anti-modern characteristics. But he had at least to prepare the ground for modernity for the sake of his aims. The War of Conquest, for which he was preparing from the outset, as well as the domination of vast areas, demanded both a new man, free from the bourgeois 19th century and its moral categories, the type of the desiccated executor, and also that modern, functionally structured industrial state which Hitler abhorred. He could not have one without the other. On various occasions, most emotionally in a speech at the beginning of 1939, he lamented this dilemma. But he never hesitated. Unerringly he decided in favour of his vision and its pre-conditions. Only occasional attacks of apathy show his doubts. To this extent I have called him the most important phenomenon of social revolution in Germany, well aware that this characterisation is of only relative significance. Anyone who recalls the Weimar difficulties, and the demands made by the former governing classes, will be unable to escape the curious admission that the German Federal Republic—as Dr Ralf Dahrendorf was the first to point out—owes part of its stability to this revolution brought about by Hitler, paradoxical as that may sound.

THIS LEADS, FINALLY, to the question of whether Hitler did not in every respect (or almost every respect) achieve the opposite of what he set out to achieve.

At all events, he destroyed both the old Germany and the old Europe, as whose "last chance" he was still describing himself in the spring of 1945. But he also succeeded in causing almost all his other fears to come true. He greatly accelerated the dawn of the egalitarian, democratic era against which he struggled with such desperate energy. He brought considerably closer the ending of the division into ruling nations and slave nations on which the colonial era was ideologically based. He made possible the foundation of the State of Israel at this particular point in time; he drew into Europe Soviet Russia, which he had wanted to push back far beyond the Urals; and, lastly, he finally destroyed the bourgeois world that he had both hated and admired.

On top of all this comes the irritating question of Hitler's negligible weight. Up to now all his biographers have wrestled, more or less visibly, with the problem of relating Hitler's insignificance and personal emptiness to the dimensions of the disaster he brought about. The fact that he was great in destruction does not make him great. On the other hand the fact that he was an inferior individual does not make him unimportant. This is the knife-edge on which every one of his biographers has been compelled to move. Perhaps one of the particular lessons to be learned from Hitler's career is that the catastrophes of this world can also be caused by an unperson. Hannah Arendt coined the famous phrase, "the banality of evil." It applies not to Hitler, but to the type of the dull-witted executor. In Hitler there was too much personal energy, dark originality and audacious madness. But a consideration of this life makes it impossible for us ever to forget that he was the one under whom evil was able to develop in such a banal manner.

ALL THIS LEADS ME to believe that this man must be regarded as somewhat more problematic, somewhat more complicated than he had hitherto been presented. Have we not all tended to make things too simple for ourselves in dealing with him? It is worth bearing in mind that the conditions under which Hitler was able to rise to power are still largely in operation. In a changing crisis-ridden world there are still calls for strong men with their simple solutions; there is still a yearning for the triumph of order over approaching chaos; the desire to escape from reality; a nostalgia for the irrational—all these fears and longings that have brought about the rise, if not of Hitler himself, then of men of the same type. The fact that the historical Hitler finally came to grief constitutes no safeguard to anyone.

ONE QUESTION RAISED at the beginning of this discussion still remains unanswered. If, as I have asserted, there is no Hitler wave and no Hitler nostalgia in Germany, how are we to explain the undeniably remarkable success of books on this subject?

To the disappointment of journalists, events often do not possess that sinister magic which members of that profession would so much like to see in them. I fear that here, too, the explanation is devoid of all dramatic aspects. It is more commonplace in character.

The new interest in Hitler, at least in Germany, is among other things a first stirring of interest in our own history. An important factor in this is the distance from events that has meanwhile developed; time heals wounds and complexes.

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This also implies that, for the Germans, Hitler is beginning to be history. He is at last becoming the object of sober analysis. The objectivity that many people are now demanding has nothing to do with the search for an alibi. I know from countless conversations that this demand is not intended to assist in avoiding admission of one's own personal error, historic guilt, or political responsibility. People merely want to have their own failure taken somewhat more seriously, and not be constantly held up to them by writers who are quite so clever, quite so blameless. To understand means not so much to forgive as simply to face facts.

Yet other viewpoints may be important in the newly-aroused interest precisely in the person of Hitler. It may, I believe, also be seen as a reaction to the de-personalisation of history as pursued in currently fashionable Marxist theories. And finally, the matter of generation also plays a part. There is a new, relatively unbiased generation that wants to know "what really happened", since many of them did not live through it themselves. They should not be taught a mere emotional response, not fobbed off, as a kind of exorcism, with "Hitler the anti-myth." That would not be enough. If, as I believe, Fascism is an outbreak of the irrational, a great rejection of reason, then it cannot be dealt with by scepticism towards knowledge and analysis. Rather, despite all lack of confidence in the power of reason, reason should be employed again and yet again in trying to grapple with its dangers.

The Breathing-Place

I.

The breathing-place. A sadness at the root,
At the root of it that leaves him weepy.
Touch me there, he says, it is my sadness.
Your picture in each falling raindrop
Your hair blowing as the rain falls
Your hair in the waters as they unfold
Your hair brushing me as you read me
Does not compensate. Touch me there, he says,
At my root, in that spot, my sadness.

II.

Well, what do you expect, she says, it is salt,
There is a finer lustre, what do you expect?
The cohabitation of saints? The halo'd penis?
The stiff charged wire spitting magnetism?
There is not a single mirror in the saints' house
Yet it seems full of mirrors as they make their love
Splashed everywhere like white grains of salt,
Like white flies, or mass-production shirts.
This gesture of his, caught by her, both laughing,
Leaning back, and the infinity of arms!
The rain falls with their faces on it,
There are endless statues of themselves on the chimney-breasts,
They dance numerously as grass-blades on the lanky lawn,
They fume incense of themselves, their tiny
Bronze nails clash, the tamboura whines OM as they bare their teeth,
The house is infested with the lovers, no one could live there again,
The pungent dust is made of them, the great garden-tree
Plunging roots from its branches is he and she!
Intolerable! They are never sad. Touch me
Here, she says, at my root, in that sadness.

Peter Redgrove

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LETTERS

"The Last Secret"

I WAS INTERESTED to read Mr Don Cook's review of *The Last Secret* by Lord Bethell [ENCOUNTER, July]. But I can assert from experience that Sir Thomas Brimelow's attitude to the problem of repatriating fugitives from the Soviet Union after the War, as exemplified by his interview with Mrs Sidorov, was nothing out of the ordinary for a Foreign Office official.

Let me give a shocking illustration. After the British Government had altered its policy towards Yugoslavia and switched its support to Tito from an Osali Government composed of Representatives of the main political parties in Yugoslavia before the country was invaded, a member of the Cabinet suffered a serious misfortune. His eldest daughter went over to the Titoists, left home in peculiarly disagreeable circumstances and married a Titoist. Her parents' youngest daughter, a girl of twelve or thirteen, was at a boarding school in a country district. She was visited by people unknown to her, who tried to persuade her to join her sister and go with her to Yugoslavia, without the knowledge of her parents. Not only the child but the school staff were alarmed.

Her parents complained of this to the Foreign Office, which had till a short time before been treating him as the Minister in an exiled Government of an ally. He got a cold answer advising him to report the matter to his local police station. When he did so he was treated with incredulity; and when he reported this to the Foreign Office he was greeted with indifference.

In the meantime the girl was receiving by post further admonitions, some of a threatening nature, to run away, at her boarding-school. I then got an appointment with a high-ranking Foreign Office official, whom I knew as a civilised acquaintance and a valued friend of many of my friends. When I got there I had a blasting reception. No Nazi official could have shown more complete indifference to the feelings of parents who finding themselves in a strange country suddenly become hostile, had reason to believe that one of their children was likely to be persuaded to leave them or even be kidnapped. I was subjected to unrestrained and meaningless abuse, which did not even attempt to deny the accuracy of the facts I was presenting. All my experience of life tells me that, if there had been a valid defence for the official attitude, it would not have been couched in these terms.

I may say that this official later represented himself as a cautious adversary of Soviet diplomatic aggression.

This and other incidents convinced me that there was some influence at work in England forwarding the Soviet Union at the cost of all our principles and without regard for our interests; and there is, as Mr Cook points out, much evidence that this was not the result of American pressure.

REBECCA WEST

London

Two Mills, or One

I AM GRATEFUL to Maurice Cranston for his generous and thoughtful review of *On Liberty and Liberalism: The Case of John Stuart Mill* [ENCOUNTER, August]. I would only like to comment on two small points on which Professor Cranston and I are in greater agreement than he may realise.

Describing the relationship of Mill and Harriet Taylor, their flouting of the social conventions which led to some ostracism, much bitterness, and a deliberate withdrawal from society after their marriage, Cranston finds that this experience makes "readily intelligible" the animus towards society expressed in *On Liberty*. He parenthetically adds that this is one reason he is not wholly convinced by my "proposal to read that essay as a feminist tract transfigured." I entirely agree. In my book I offer two main explanations for *On Liberty*, one being the feminist argument; the other being precisely the relationship with Harriet Taylor which made them seem two beleaguered spirits resisting the conventions and encroachments of society.

Professor Cranston is dissatisfied with my final chapter in which I make an intellectual connection between the argument of *On Liberty* and some of the ideas advanced by the "counter-culture." He quotes two long passages in which Mill expressed views utterly at variance with current permissive fashions: in the first Mill looked forward to a time when the sexual passions would be so restrained as to be "completely under the control of reason"; in the second he criticised Fourier for having the "freest notions about personal relations", for supposing that in the commune "nobody is ever to be made to do anything but act just as they like. . . ." Nothing, Cranston concludes, could be more alien to the "anarchistic radicalism of the *avant garde* today." I couldn't agree more. That is why I cited those same passages to the same effect. Both of the passages are from the "other Mill"; both are as opposed to the spirit of *On Liberty* as they are to the current *avant garde*. Indeed I repeated that second quotation at the very end of my book when I suggested, once again, that the best corrective to current excesses, and to the simplistic absolutism of *On Liberty*, is the writings of the "other Mill."

GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB

New York City

Northrop Frye: "Forgotten"?

I MUCH APPRECIATED George Watson's judicious appraisal of the French New Criticism in the February issue of ENCOUNTER, but am puzzled by the gratuitous slap at Northrop Frye in the first paragraph. Whether or not Mr Watson would agree with my contention that Frye is one of the most important literary critics that the English-speaking world has produced in this century (along with William Empson and a very few others), he surely does Frye an injustice to rank him with Marshall McLuhan as a figure of brief cult adoration. It is untrue, furthermore, at least in this country, that Frye's "doctrines and procedures", if such a phrase can be said to describe the method of *An Anatomy of Criticism*, are by now "forgotten." I think that among serious readers of literature

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Frye's theories of modes, symbols, myths, and genres have been less forgotten than absorbed.

MARK TAYLOR

Manhattan College,
New York

Keynes & Keynesians

"THERE IS NOTHING in Keynes's writings, philosophy, or work which coincides with present-day Keynesians' viewpoints on inflation policy."

Thus, in your April issue, Mr Tim Congdon concludes his review of the scriptures. One is reminded of Sir John Hicks's recent comment that it is time people ceased quoting the scriptures and thought for themselves. But let us for the moment take Congdon's statement seriously (and ignore for the moment other small problems in the article such as the reversal of the facts of wage price behaviour during 1919–20).

Mr Congdon in his article makes considerable use of Susan Howson's article in the June 1973 issue of *The Economic Journal* reporting conduct of monetary policy in 1920. In fact, he cites all Keynes's contributions to this debate in full, except one. The exception is Keynes's comment covering the collection of 1920s papers, which he added in 1942 after arranging for the preservation of the documents. Congdon cites only three sentences of this on p. 32 of his article. It was with ellipses, for Keynes's 1942 note (which is similar to comments he sent to Richard Kahn at the time) contained the following additional material between the first two sentences he cited:

> "What impresses me most is the complete hopelessness of the situation. All controls have been abandoned. It was not politically possible to reintroduce rationing. There was no capital control. The notion of disciplining the joint stock banks, who seem to have been extraordinarily truculent and independent, was outside the philosophy of the age. Since the Bank of England regarded the return to full gold convertibility at the old parity as the end of all existence, exchange depreciation was ruled out. With all the methods of control, then so unorthodox, excluded, I feel myself that I should give today exactly the same advice. . . ."

If this is not enough by way of omission, Mr Congdon then leaves out the final paragraphs of Keynes's 1942 covering note, which ran as follows:

> "I propose to write a separate paper on the lessons of this [1920] for the next time. The main one seems to be that all controls—rationing control, raw material control, new issue control, bank credit control and high taxation control—must be retained in principle for a period of at least two years and only gradually relaxed as and when consumer goods become available in greater quantities.
>
> "If the vast bulk of purchasing power which must necessarily exist at the end of the war, is released in psychological conditions necessarily surrounding the end of the war, the result cannot be different from what it was in 1919 to 1921."

So much for what Mr Congdon left out. It would seem to suggest that perhaps he was pushing Keynes too far—or at the least trying to use him out of context. For the aftermath of a world war may be different from a world of peacetime when the economy is operating more or less continuously at high levels of employment. It is this situation that Mr Congdon's "Keynesians" are trying to deal with. And in this situation one can find more than enough ammunition in Keynes for many varied points of view, especially if one, following Mr Congdon's example, wishes to lift it out of context.

It is clear, however, from Keynes's war-time discussions of the implications of working the economy at "full employment" that he, for one, had before his death not come to any firm policy conclusions. He had not had time to think it out for himself. Perhaps we have.

D. E MOGGRIDGE.

Clare College,
Cambridge

DR MOGGRIDGE is right. I must plead guilty to overstatement, but I don't think the omission of the material he cites particularly misleading. Keynes clearly favoured the ultimate abandonment of controls, whereas many of the present day Keynesians appear to see a permanent role for them.

Dr Moggridge says that "one can find more than enough ammunition in Keynes for many varied points of view." I strongly disagree with this. For example, two continuous themes in Keynes' writings are that adjustments of the wage level are more difficult than adjustments of the money supply or the exchange rate, and that in normal conditions money supply bears a stable relationship to money national income. Either of these attitudes would differentiate Keynes sharply from a modern (Cambridge) Keynesian. It is difficult to regard these as "small problems."

TIM CONGDON

London

Allende's Chile

BOTH of your correspondents—Richard Hall and David Holden (Letters, April)—have taken rather obviously attractive postures on the supposedly decisive role of the CIA in the collapse of the Allende régime in Chile. Mr Hall follows the news dispatches and bravely calls attention to "new facts." Mr Holden pauses to listen, decently admits an error, and then reformulates his thesis.

But each, it seems to me, reconsidereth too much. How much do they—or we—really know about what happened? A quick headline based on some off-the-cuff press conference remark won't really do. I think, therefore, your readers would be interested in some of the "new non-facts" as established by William F. Buckley's *National Review*, "When a Story is Not a Story" (14 February 1975), pp. 151–2.

> "In an interview with the *Village Voice*, Seymour Hersh, Pulitzer Prize winning reporter of the Mylai massacre and the man on the *New York Times* who takes credit for the story of the CIA's involvement in domestic spying, talked about his own research

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into the charge of direct American involvement in the overthrow. Hersh admitted that he had a bias; he was 'unconsciously inclined to think' that the CIA was 'totally responsible' for Allende's overthrow. But his investigations turned up no evidence to support his bias: 'I spent an incredible amount of work—dozens of interviews—digging into a number of allegations by a number of people that the American military was directly involved in the overthrow of Allende. I did a lot of work and I couldn't find it. It's just not true; in other words, it's not there. I'm not going to write that story; it's gone, kaput' . . .

"Interesting, isn't it, the stories Hersh is inclined to investigate? What's more, when a story doesn't develop the way Hersh expects, he doesn't write about it. It would have been news if he had discovered that U.S. pilots had bombed Moneda Palace. Unable to find it, he drops it and moves on to seek other CIA enormities."

ANDRÉ BEAUMONT

Montréal

Gurdjieff, Sufism & Pseudo-Sufism

Further Letters & a Reply

I MUST DRAW ATTENTION to errors of fact as well as misleading statements concerning Ouspensky and Gurdjieff in Elwell-Sutton's article on Sufism (May 1975).

It was the late J. G. Bennett who set up a community at Coombe Springs, but this had nothing to do with Ouspensky who, by that time, disapproved both of Bennett and his activities. In 1946, the community at Coombe Springs was therefore neither the "remnant" of the Ouspensky group, the main body of which was situated elsewhere, nor was it "forlorn", having, at that time, a strong, if misguided, sense of mission.

Subsequently, Bennett renewed his connection with Gurdjieff whom he had originally met in Constantinople just after the First World War. After Gurdjieff's death in 1949, he transferred his allegience to Subud, and, later, when he found this connection unsatisfactory, he made contact with Idries Shah to whom Coombe Springs was eventually handed over. Shortly after receiving this gift, Idries Shah sold Coombe in a property deal for what must have been a considerable sum. Bennett, however, does not appear to have made much headway with him; and recently, on his own initiative, founded the Institute for Continuous Education at Sherbourne House, near Oxford. It was here, amidst further plans for expansion, involving a centre in the United States, that he died on 13 December 1974.

From this it can be seen that Idries Shah's connection with Gurdjieff and Ouspensky is so remote as to be virtually non-existent. But the article gives a wrong impression not only of his relation to them, but of the relationship between the two men themselves, and even of their characters. According to Elwell-Sutton, Gurdjieff and Ouspensky were "two Russian eccentrics who met in Moscow in 1915 and decided that they had a message to give the world." This phrase, giving the impression of a collaboration between equals, and of the pooling of resources in a proselytising mission, is entirely misleading. In his book *In Search of the Miraculous*, Ouspensky makes it perfectly clear that his relationship to Gurdjieff was that of pupil to teacher; and that Gurdjieff, so far from trying to popularise his teaching, made conditions in his group intentionally difficult so that anyone with only a superficial interest was rapidly discouraged. As to eccentricity, it is a characteristic which cannot be ascribed to Ouspensky in any respect. It was precisely the impression of normality and matter-of-factness which he conveyed, as well as the caution with which he gave out the ideas, which caused people to take him seriously, even if they did not agree with everything he said. As for Gurdjieff, the term "eccentric" is hardly strong enough for so formidable a character. Let it suffice to say that he had a very highly developed sense of humour!

TO ELWELL-SUTTON, Gurdjieff's ideas are "a strange jumble of ill-digested scraps", taken from a variety of sources, which hardly justify the term "System", with which they were dignified. In fact, this term is highly inappropriate, and crept into use among Ouspensky's pupils after Ouspensky had broken with Gurdjieff, which he did in 1923 (not 1932, as the article states). The title of Ouspensky's book was originally to have been *Man and the World in which he lives—Fragments of an Unknown Teaching*. This is a far more accurate description. The purpose of Gurdjieff's thought was not to establish a system of consistent mutually sustaining philosophical ideas, giving notional satisfaction, and nothing else; but to furnish practical support in many forms for an effort which can be made by an individual in the conditions of life today, for the concentration of those energies which are required to realise the latent possibilities within the human being, and to free it from its limitations. The ideas, therefore, delineated a method rather than a system; and a method the aim of which is precisely the same as that of other ways of self-transcendence known to man, both in the past and in the present.

It must be clear that a method can only be evaluated through practice, and that this necessarily eliminates reliance either on belief or on that authority, demand-

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ing uncritical acceptance, which Elwell-Sutton so much deplores. "Never trust anyone—least of all me!" was a characteristic saying of Gurdjieff; and indeed, woe betide anyone who did! Nevertheless, even the gods fight in vain against stupidity! You cannot legislate for fools! There will always be those who think that life is the game of Follow-my-Leader! And, after all, Elwell-Sutton himself appears to favour taking counsel of "informed enquiry and expert assessment"—provided it is sought, presumably, within the ambit of one of our great universities! How disillusioning, then, to find that, outside the context of his special subject, one such academic expert turns out to be an unreliable witness—even when it comes to the statement of plain and simple facts!

THERE REMAINS ONE FURTHER POINT of correction with which this rebuttal should be concluded. By stating that Idries Shah "is heir to a movement started some sixty years ago by Gurdjieff and Ouspensky", and by confusing Bennett's group with theirs, Elwell-Sutton gives the impression that Gurdjieff's work has petered out, and that the remnants of his flock have been gathered unto Idries Shah. This is far from being the case. There are, at this moment, well-established groups in London, Paris and New York—to name but three of the greater centres—where Gurdjieff's ideas and dance-gymnastic movements are seriously studied under the direction of those who were most closely associated with him, in France, at the time of his death. These groups do not advertise their existence, and are not particularly easy of access.

Although I am associated with none of them, I am writing this letter on their behalf because I think that it is fair, both to them, and to those who may be anxious to contact them, that rumour, innuendo, and malicious gossip should not go unanswered, and should be expunged, wherever possible, from the written record. That Gurdjieff's basic work can be harmed by such distortions, I do not fear; but I am concerned to remove unnecessary obstacles, unnecessarily imposed, from the paths to that work which may be taken by sincere people who sense that it may hold an answer to their problems.

MALCOLM STEWART

Haslemere, Surrey

IN MR L. P. ELWELL-SUTTON'S article on "Sufism & Pseudo-Sufism" in your May issue, there is a brief reference to Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, which contains several mistakes and inaccuracies.

Not only Sufis, but Christian and Buddhist scholars as well, have claimed that Gurdjieff's teaching derives from their tradition but in fact the sources of Gurdjieff's teaching are not known since he never divulged what they were. Ouspensky who broke with Gurdjieff in 1924, not 1932, and died in 1947, not 1946, had nothing to do with Coombe Springs, as the late Mr J. G. Bennett would have been the first to confirm. Mr Bennett's following is now based at Sherborne House, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, not at Coombe Springs, and the Society for Understanding Fundamental Ideas is not directly concerned with the teachings of Gurdjieff or Ouspensky.

In the interests of scholarship upheld by your magazine, we would appreciate your printing this letter.

JOHN PENTLAND

The Gurdjieff Foundation,
New York City

HAVING READ Mr Elwell-Sutton's article in your May issue (re Idries Shah) one is brought to the conclusion that here is another scholar—albeit a rather spiteful, envious one—who, like most scholars, "cannot see the wood for the trees." One gathers from his "conventional", "traditional" defence of scholasticism that he is also a "specialist" or "expert" on Islamic thought and literature.

It would not be fair to expect such a one, disabled as he is by the narrowness of his vision, to be able to grasp either the aims, or the methods used, by such comparative giants as Gurdjieff, Ouspensky and Shah. One wonders how many days he would last in a Gurdjieff school, or as a practising Sufi?

His words have the flavour of the finite (Elwell-Sutton) trying to comprehend the Infinite; not that I am suggesting that Gurdjieff, Ouspensky and Shah are Infinite, but they have had experience of it, and therefore have due respect for it, which last Mr E-S transparently cannot lay claim to.

N. G. D. CHOAT

London

Elwell-Sutton's Reply

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute . . .

BUT PSEUDO-SUFISM is evidently no Grape, if one may judge from the cloud of bees that I have brought buzzing angrily from their rival hives, stinging everything in sight. I must certainly apologise for having unwittingly implied that the Gurdjieff movement was dead; obviously not, if contentiousness is a sign of life. Gurdjieff good, Ouspensky bad, Gurdjieff and Ouspensky good, Shah bad, Gurdjieff bad, Shah good: we have them all, even one splendid fellow who gives his allegiance to all three. On one point alone do they all find common ground—my error in confusing Coombe Springs, Kingston Hill, with Lyne Place, Virginia Water. How silly of me! But the property dealings of our unworldly pseudo-mystics have always been so complicated (though doubtless lucrative) that a mere outsider may perhaps be forgiven for losing his way occasionally.

It's all rather odd, since my article (as both title and text made clear) was devoted to a critique of contemporary claimants to the designation of "Sufi", and my references to Gurdjieff and Ouspensky were only marginal. Evidently though I have touched a sensitive nerve here. The connection exists and cannot be glossed over, even by those who quite understandably dislike the course along which Idries Shah has directed their teachings. However, even the faithful seem in doubt as to how they all tie up. Moore, for instance, denies that Ouspensky was a pupil of Gurdjieff; Stewart asserts with equal vehemence that he was. Currer-Briggs refuses Bennett any connection with

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Gurdjieff; yet it was Bennett's group who 24 years ago organised a performance of Gurdjieffian dances at the Fortune Theatre in London, the programme of which lies before me as I write. Very possibly, as Moore claims, Idries Shah did write *The Teachers of Gurdjieff*; if so, it is clearly relevant to a study of Shah's activities and of the teachings that he is promulgating, as it is also evidence of his exploitation of the Gurdjieff movement in the furtherance of his schemes. As Moore says, the book is not to be treated as history; to take but one example, a well-known Baghdad calligrapher whom "Rafael Lefort" claims to have interviewed, was not in 1960 "four score and nine years", but forty-one, so that he could never have met Gurdjieff in Asia, let alone taught him anything.

As to the current title of Gurdjieff's still unpublished third book, Moore is, I willingly concede, better informed than I am. What *is* it called?

It is interesting, too, that Stewart should argue that Gurdjieff did not require absolute submission from his followers, since it was precisely because of Ouspensky's unwillingness to continue under Gurdjieff's "direct leadership" that he "broke" with Gurdjieff in 1924, in the sense that he decided to carry on promoting Gurdjieff's teachings in his own way. His visits to Gurdjieff in France are said to have continued for some years after that, but if Stewart and Pentland think they didn't, they are doubtless right. Perhaps it depends on which group you belong to.

Both Moore and Pentland accuse me of wrongly suggesting that Gurdjieff's teaching derived from Sufism, a curious charge considering that I was at pains to point out that none of these modern pseudo-mysticisms owe anything to genuine Sufism. Still, we mustn't grudge your correspondents their innocent fun at the expense of the conventional image of the blinkered scholar buried in his books and out of touch with this world and the next. (Actually the reality isn't quite like that, but never mind.)

No, I don't regard universities as the sole repositories of knowledge, though they are not bad places to look for it. All I am asking for is the exercise of critical faculties—something that certain Gurdjieffians, Ouspenskyists and Shahites seem equally at pains to discourage.

As for Idries Shah's sole apologist, Mr David Pendlebury, does he really expect us to be impressed by unsupported *ex parte* assertions culled from a book specially commissioned to boost the Shah image? Facts, alas, speak louder than words, as the man said. Nothing he says regarding the Idries Shah *"festschrift"* alters my opinion that it is a worthless exercise in fawning sycophancy (one reason, possibly, why Jonathan Cape agreed merely to be "associated with" the Octagon Press—Shah's own press—in its publication). The motives of its authors I have tried to suggest in my article.

L. P. ELWELL-SUTTON

Edinburgh

Dr Kiosk Speaks Again

A REPORT *just published by some legal and penal reform groups calls for a new body to take over the work of the present Boards of Visitors: the trying of prisoners for serious disciplinary offences committed in jail.*

This new tribunal would be selected from a panel appointed by the Lord Chancellor, and would consist of a circuit judge or recorder together with two lay members, local magistrates for preference.

Dr Heinz Kiosk, the eminent psycho-penologist and chief psychiatric adviser to the Marshmallow and Chocolate Almond Whorl Authority, told a Press conference yesterday: "This is merely tinkering with the problem.*

"It is also perpetuating the long-exploded idea that there is any valid distinction between the so-called 'legal' authorities and the so-called 'criminals' they deal with. This new tribunal to try prisoners for so-called 'serious disciplinary offences' will be a hollow façade unless it includes representatives of the prisoners themselves.

"They alone are capable of feeling the necessary degree of empathy which makes a judgment, given a framework of role-playing reference, judicially, environmentally and heuristically valid. It would therefore be desirable that such prisoners be in a majority on any tribunal rather than those with a role-weighted, vested interest in the matter."

Dr Kiosk paused, his mouth opening and closing and his eyes beginning to revolve slowly. It was almost as though for a moment he had forgotten what he was going to say.

His audience watched, fascinated. That is why, when the expected words "We are all Guilty" burst out at last, the frantic rush for the doors came far too late.

Peter Simple
IN THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

* See the Profile of Dr Kiosk by Michael Wharton in ENCOUNTER, April 1975.

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Sartre's Logic

I SEE the point of M.J.L.'s "In the Margin" analysis of Jean-Paul Sartre's attitudes over the years to Soviet concentration camps ["From Sartre to Solzhenitsyn", ENCOUNTER, July]. But if the Sartrean ideology is so illogical, or "irrational", then it seems to me that one shouldn't really search so assiduously for a political logic which links inexorably every sentiment and prejudice of a brilliantly eccentric mind.

Bird-watchers of revolutionary ideology must surely know the wild eccentricities of the species. In the turbulent 1960s, for example, the attitude of Pier-Paolo Pasolini to the Italian street riots was surprising: he sided with the local police against the university students—because the students were "petty-bourgeois creatures", and the policemen were "sons of the working-class!" A not dissimilar logicality was behind Sartre's recent comment on Portuguese affairs after he returned from a "revolutionary tour" of Lisbon. As he explained on *Radio Europe 1* in a broadcast which I heard, he put his trust in the Armed Forces Movement as the best expression of the Will of the People. Soldiers after all emerge from the masses; and he was impressed by the fact that he actually saw a few military officers reading works by Karl Marx! As is well known, power comes from a barrelful of pamphlets.

FRITZ BONN

Zurich

Point Taken

I ADMIRE and enjoy your periodical greatly, and think it worth far more than the money I have to pay for it. But one thing about it has always puzzled me: why the suspensive (or possibly omissive) strings of dots at the end of the notes on contributors? Surely it would be no great loss if a simple full stop were substituted?

EDMUND CRISPIN

Dartington,
Totnes, Devon

Moralists & the Law

I FEAR THAT the issue between Mrs Shirley Robin Letwin and me [ENCOUNTER, May, July] is wider than she suspects. I question not only the practicability of her theoretical statements (though this is a criterion for which no excuses are needed) but their intrinsic validity. I am nevertheless indebted to her for the trouble she has taken with her reply, because nothing illuminates better the targets of my criticism than the flashes of her quick-fire.

I never suggested that *all* statements must serve merely as guides to "right practical action" or as "manuals for politicians." My contention is that in so far as such statements purport to be justified or supported by evidence, we were entitled to enquire if in fact such justification or support existed. This method of establishing the validity of political generalisations is sound and someone who is as conversant with the English pragmatic tradition as Mrs Letwin is need not object to this kind of probing. At the risk of appearing ungracious—and I readily acknowledge that I enjoyed being taken by the hand and invited to an epistemological journey going as far back as Sparta and Athens—I must revert to the issues which divide us.

Firstly, the little matter of terminology. "Ruler of civil association" and "manager of public enterprise" are bewildering and confusing expressions. There can be no objection to the use of unfamiliar combinations of commonplace words when they succeed in expressing succinctly a complicated idea. But what do the designations used by Mrs Letwin convey? Presumably "ruler of civil association" is used to define a *laissez-faire* régime while "manager of the public enterprise" an interventionist one. I do not wish to ruffle Mrs Letwin's metaphysical feathers, but does she think that by avoiding terms that have distinct and established associations, her arguments are purified or endowed with an aura of impartiality? Do the ordinary aspects of daily life acquire a deeper phenomenal significance when they are compressed into new-fangled concepts? Certainly not in this instance.

Assuming however for argument's sake that we accept Mrs Letwin's chosen labels, does her fundamental dichotomy help in any way *to understand* the various modes in which political authority is being exercised?

To answer this, we must first of all enquire if it is conceivable—even as an ideal—to have a government that is merely "establishing rules within which members of civil association pursue their private purposes in orderly fashion"? Conversely, can we imagine a government which merely "directs the activities of its subject so as to follow the goal or goals it is pursuing"?

Possibly somewhere there is a charmed world in which these simplified contrasting models enjoy an ethereal existence; but what is the point of this feat of imagination when we know only too well that every government exercises authority and power both as a "ruler of a civil association" and as a "manager of a public enterprise", and that both characteristics inevitably overlap because of the multiplicity of a government's simultaneous actions?

Of course, the ingredients vary in every case, and the degree of interventionism *does* indeed determine the quality of any particular government. But the mere identification of these traits and their classification does in no way advance our understanding of their nature or their complexities.

The "either/or" approach is equally unhelpful when Mrs Letwin seeks to contrast "thought for the sake of understanding" with "thought for the sake of action" in one of those nice debating points which become a little less exciting when we remember that there is hardly any thought that does not eventually find expression in some form of action—writing for instance.

Mrs Letwin did not care for my translation into plain language of one of her propositions, and she challenges me to state what I mean by a "measure of consent to the form of government under which we happen to live." What are we consenting to (wonders Mrs Letwin)?

Continued on page 96

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Lord Shawcross:

ONE THING *that was notable during the Referendum campaign was, I thought, the very balanced coverage which the press gave to the opposing arguments. Of course it wasn't all argument: there was a welter of truths, half-truths and downright lies. But although odd phenomena (like Clive Jenkins) are now attacking the conduct of the Referendum in strident language, the fact is that very full and fair publicity was given to both sides. Editors did not conceal their own views: they would have been gravely lacking in integrity if they had. But they saw to it that the issues were placed fairly and squarely before the electorate. There are such sinister attacks on The Press nowadays—and I shall return to that—that that ought to be said.*

But the Referendum—to the holding of which I was myself opposed—has other things to teach us, I get around a bit: in the last three weeks or so, I have visited eight foreign countries from Malaysia in the East to Scandinavia in the north and several times to the Continent; I was in Iran on Monday. And everywhere I have been our friends, because they are our friends, from heads of State down to the humblest people, have asked me more or less the same question which being translated was "What on earth is happening in Britain?" They were not asking about our economic position, although they are gravely concerned about that. Other countries have economic problems, albeit less serious. Nor were they really asking about the Common Market issue, although they were greatly shocked by the lies and distortions of which certain leading Cabinet figures appeared to be guilty.

I said five years ago that if the Government did not tackle Inflation seriously (they had just abandoned the policy of wage restraint and Barbara Castle's manifesto, "In Place of Strife") we should in a year or two face a further devaluation. Denis Healey said I was talking nonsense and "The Guardian" rebuked me in more elegant journalese. My time-table was wrong by six months. And when I endorsed Professor Hugh Clegg's view that this country is "dead set on a disaster course which short of a miracle will lead to a cheap totalitarian Government of the Right or the Left within five years" Barbara Castle also said I was talking nonsense. Now Anthony Crosland says we are set on a "suicide course."

LORD SHAWCROSS was a member of the first post-war Labour Government which ousted Winston Churchill in 1945 (on which occasion he used the now-famous phrase "We are the masters now.") He was Chief Prosecutor for the UK in the Nuremberg Trials in Germany in 1946 and served as Attorney General in the Attlee Government 1945–51. Since 1959 he has been an independent Member of the House of Lords.

IS THERE A *prospect of totalitarian government? I can see that there may be those who believe that in modern conditions the only form of government which can expect to be effective and efficient is a totalitarian or one-party one. In some developing countries I think that this is true. While I regard the Communist system as now practised in Eastern Europe with abhorrence as one promoting gross inequality between man and man, creating countries which are prisons and terror amongst their inhabitants, and in foreign matters pursuing with the back-up of immense armaments imperialist policies most dangerous to peace, I think that in China a Communist régime was quite essential, for when one compares the situation in China 30 years ago with that which exists now, one cannot help being greatly impressed. But Britain is not China, still less Russia. Will a totalitarian system become inevitable here? I hope not, but that is really what lies behind that question which I was asked abroad about what was going on in Britain (and which Professor Clegg courageously expressed).*

THE FACT CANNOT BE DENIED *not only that during the last decade power has steadily been passing away from Parliament, but that Parliament is (to say the least) no longer respected in the way it used to be; politicians are largely regarded with suspicion, if not contempt. They have only themselves to blame. The public at large views with increasing dislike the "sham fights" (a Cabinet Minister's recent description) which have for some time been a characteristic of Parliamentary discussion and which are conducted now with a venom and distortion far exceeding anything I experienced.*

But I left Party politics in 1958 mainly because I found it utterly tedious to have to conform to the doctrine that it is "the duty of the Opposition to oppose." It never had a respectable origin: its slavish and asinine pursuit today is fatal to any Parliamentary democracy. The duty of the Opposition is vigilantly to scrutinise everything—to question—to oppose that which is wrong, and equally to support that which is right and realistic. Both Parties when in Opposition have during this last decade signally failed in that duty, and the general disillusion with politics by the public at large—and also by many many able sincere young people who otherwise might go in for a political career—is one of the measures of that failure.

And then—and partly because of this abuse of democracy in Parliament—power is steadily passing away from Parliament. It is not only the strength of outside interests animated by cupidity and greed—not only the Trade Unions, although they are by far the most powerful factor—it is also that individual members of the House of Commons are increasingly

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"Who are the Masters Now?"

regarded as mere "delegates"—puppets who are expected to manipulate themselves according to the requirements of some section of their constituents or some Union which supported them.[1]

When I very foolishly said many years ago something like "We are the masters now!" *I meant of course the Members of Parliament representing the electors. Authorities like Bagehot and Dicey, parliamentarians like Burke must be turning in their graves at the way in which attempts are being made to subordinate Members of Parliament to the dictate not of their local constituency but, far worse, to that of their local constituency party, or to some Party Conference or Trade Union Executive which in practice means to a handful of zealots who choose to turn up on these occasions. What a pass we have come to when a great Trade Union leader (or should I say the leader of a great Trade Union and also a member of the Prime Minister's own Party) threatens that if he exercised his right to make certain recommendations in regard to the composition of his Cabinet "All hell will break loose!" I would like that famous speech of Burke to the Sheriffs of Bristol to be read, marked, learned and inwardly digested by every Member of Parliament, half of whom have perhaps never heard of him. I make no excuse for repeating the famous passage:*

> **"Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but Parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole—where not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member, indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not member of Bristol, but he is a member of Parliament."**

It was said 200 years ago, and if Parliament is to survive it is as vital a truth today as it was when Burke said it. But is Parliament to survive? The brutal truth is—and it is the truth—that the Government cannot govern and Parliament cannot rule if these powerful outside interests are determined to defy them. They don't even try to; the Referendum was an abdication of Parliament's responsibility.

[1] And here it should be noted that it is the clear intention of that small section of the Labour Party which controls its policy as expressed in *The People and the Media* to make Editors the delegates of the van drivers, print workers, journalists, and other trade unionists employed in the production of newspapers. That is what this so-called "industrial democracy" means.

AND WHY IS THERE **this open defiance of Parliament and Government? There is a complex of reasons, but one of the most powerful is a general realisation by the mass of the people that Parliament no longer represents the mass of the people. The statement constantly made by Ministers that they were "elected to do this" or have "a mandate for their manifesto to do that" is a plain lie. They were not elected to do anything. Of the total electorate, 29% voted for the Socialists. 39% voted against them and their policies. And 30% were so disenchanted with politics they did not vote at all. Yet the 29% are forcing upon an unwilling people policies of which the mass of them disapprove. That is an inescapable implication of the votes in the General Election—and now again in the Referendum.**

IF YOU ASK ME—*"so what?" I would say there are two straightforward remedies. The first is for Liberals and Tories to agree now that if returned to power they will introduce a system of Electoral Reform which will ensure fair representation of all significant sectors of opinion. That would produce not weak but stable Government. And, secondly, I would give the Trade Unions a free postal vote for important elections and decisions. That would produce democracy in the Trade Unions.*

I dare say these things won't happen, and then Professor Clegg's prophecy will come true. It does not matter to me individually now what happens: "The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" can touch me not . . . But I have children, friends, a country I love, and I would be sad to think that some day that country would become a prison under totalitarian rule. There is one good thing which came out during the Referendum Campaign: men of goodwill from all Parties and from none got together in amity to promote a common cause.

I WILL NOT TALK **of "Coalition." That is a dirty word which, in Burke's language, creates "a petulance which the rage of party stirs up in little minds." But is there not a possibility, even under this Prime Minister, that an attempt be made to unite the country by pursuing policies which will command if not a general consensus at least the support of the mass of the people. You cannot unite the country behind doctrinaire policies. I believe the people could be united if they saw that the policies being pursued were not partisan but—dare I say it—patriotic in a true sense. But the people must speak loud and clear and soon if Government by the people and for the people is not to perish from this country. I hope they quickly will.**

Shawcross

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To almost anything. Here in England to Inflation and its causes. In Eastern Europe to repression of all sorts. And in the past—didn't most Germans consent to Hitler? Of course, sometimes something snaps. Crowds set fire to trams in Naples when the fares go up or beat up striking train-drivers in Japan, or even try to overturn their oppressive dictators (although the East German, Polish, Hungarian and Portuguese revolts were not exactly encouraging in their outcome). By and large, however, the "rational beings" in Mrs Letwin's scheme of things are content to bear and grumble whether they consent, acquiesce, or merely endure the régime under which they happen to live.

LIONEL BLOCH

London

Orwell to Kolakowski

How SAD it is to think that a quarter-of-a-century after George Orwell's titanic attempt to clean the Augean stables the odour of "doublethink" is still so overpowering. It is noble of Lescek Kolakowski to hold his nose and try, yet again, to (at the very least) open a few doors and break a few windows and let a little fresh air in!

I read his bitter ironies ("My Correct Views on Everything", ENCOUNTER, June) about the same time as I came across the following. I think your readers will appreciate the absurdity of its relevance. It is a first-hand report of the kind of double-standard *Newspeak* that Orwell and Kolakowski (and a small remnant who can still smile at Alice-in-Wonderland) collect, and we should do our best to preserve it for the historians. (My quote is taken from "The Dubcek Era Revisited", by Radoslav Selucky, in *Problems of Communism*, Jan-Feb. 1975, p. 41).

> "Was Dubcek, in fact, in control of the situation? If we mean 'control' in a democratic sense, he was. If we mean 'control' in Soviet terms, he was not. In the July 29-August 1 meeting at Cierna-nad-Tissou, Brezhnev expressed doubts whether Dubcek was still in control of the Czechoslovak reform movement; Dubcek was quite sure that he was, and he pointed out that he had received a resolution supporting his policies signed by four million people. Brezhnev argued that this was no evidence, that he knew how resolutions could be produced. Dubcek assured the Soviet leader that *this* resolution was different, having been initiated directly by the people. Brezhnev rejoined: 'How can you claim that you are in control of the situation if the people sign a resolution without your prior knowledge?'..."

PAVEL HACEK

Paris

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Wohin Der Stier Europa Trug, the book in which H. G. Wunderlich set out his controversial interpretation of the civilisation of Knossos, and which was discussed by **Gerhard Prause** in the May 1974 issue of ENCOUNTER, has now been published in England under the title *The Secret of Crete* (Souvenir Press, £4.50).

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London

I SAY!: One of the last letters to be written by P. G. Wodehouse before he died at the weekend was to his old friend Sir Terence Rattigan, who had written to congratulate Jeeves' creator on his New Year's knighthood.

"Life has been very hectic since the announcement", wrote Wodehouse. "Every ruddy interviewer and photographer in the U.S.A. arrived. One of the interviewers, by the way, put me properly in my place. 'What was your latest book, sir?' he said. I replied that it was a Jeeves novel. 'And what is a Jeeves novel?' he asked."

EVENING STANDARD

Reading

YEA, YEA, NAY, NAY: *"If a woman resists", says Sir Harold Cassell, GC, "the man may think she is in fact consenting, and is giving him the additional thrill of a struggle." To which Lord Hailsham adds, "If he believes the woman is consenting to rough treatment because she likes it . . . it would not be rape. . . . What a woman wants and what she consents to may be two different things."*

Quite apart from the rather obvious point that what a man believes and what he says he believes may also be two different things, we can't help but wonder [write Dee Wells and Shirley Conran] how far Lord Hailsham follows this lordly logic. For example, when he votes "No" does he really mean "Yes", but is giving the Whip "the additional thrill of a struggle"?

If the Whip were to "believe" Lord Hailsham in fact meant "Yes" although voting "No", in which column would Lord Hailsham's vote be recorded? If, as would seem to be the case, "No" no longer means "No" when the person to whom it is said chooses not to believe it, how does Lord Hailsham or for that matter a resisting woman, say "No"?

If a struggling woman shouting "No" registers on the male mind as a consenting woman saying "Yes", then the Duke of Wellington was right, because a man who could believe that could believe anything.

THE TIMES

Houston, Texas

TEXAN ENGLISH: *The idea for a three-volume "Illustrated Texan Dictionary of the English Language" just published by Jim Everhart came while watching President Lyndon Johnson on television in 1967. Texas speech, thereafter, needed some explaining. His dictionary has now sold more than a half-million copies in all 50 states. The Dictionary includes entries like:*

TARRED—**exhausted.** *Boy am I tarred!*

ARN—**a silver-white metallic element.** *Mah muscle is as strong as arn.*

TOAD—**the past-tense of tell.** *Ah toad you never to do that.*

PRAYED—**a large public procession, usually including a marching band.** *That was some prayed they had downtown.*

And so it goes. Some couples in Texas get divorced, some have a good "marge". All Texans swelter in the summer "hate", and 5280 feet around here will always equal a "moll."

Professional linguists do seem to agree that Texas English is distinct. The best example, said Dr Hilda Jaffe, a linguist at the University of Houston, could be the pronunciation of the name of the state. It's always "Tihxas" or "Teaxisss"—never Texas.

Helen Mann, the information officer at the 21-member British consulate here, said coming to Texas was "a bit of a cultural shock." But, she said, the rumours that consulate members receive hardship pay because of the stifling humidity or the quirks of language are not true. Although in Houston, Calcutta, and possibly a few other places, British diplomats did receive compensatory time advantages helpful for promotion.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

London

LATIN LESSON: *Your Business News asserts confidently that the term referendum, used for the process of democratic decision, has the plural referenda because it is a gerundive meaning "a thing meet to be referred".*

The premise is wrong. The word came into our language from the old Swiss Confederacy and its modern successors. It is short for ad referendum, *meaning "for carrying back", and denotes the taking back for mandatory instructions of a proposal from the confederative Diet to the sovereign canton, or community, of each member.*

By analogy it also refers to all taking back of proposals (made by a representative assembly) to the sovereign people. It is a gerund (if I've got it the right way round) and means "referring". In Latin, ad referendum *would not change into the plural if several matters were referred, but if the word has become English then the plural is referendums. Similarly one does not talk—if one wishes to be thought educated—of propagandae because propaganda, too, is a gerund.*

THE TIMES

London

TROLLOPE: Disillusionment with Simon Raven's TV adaptation of Trollope finally set in when he made Phineas's marriage to poor little Mary Jones a shotgun affair in "The Pallisers". This was not only false to Trollope, it was completely unnecessary. Unfortunately it epitomised Mr Raven's apparent determination to impose a bit of modern sexual freedom on his author.

No doubt the Victorians would have been better and happier people had they been less hopelessly inhibited about sex. The fact remains that they were and that Trollope is their most faithful chronicler. He could no more have written some of the lines given to Lopez last week than Mozart could have composed "The Rite of Spring."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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William Shakespeare

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There have been many lives of Shakespeare, but never till now one in which the documents that form the basis of what we know about his life were married to the narrative. Over two hundred documents are reproduced in exact facsimile, with the narrative chronicling the history of the family, the legends of Shakespeare's youth, the emergence and triumphs of the playwright of the London stage, and his last years and death. Illustrated £12

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Edited by Louis Blom-Cooper

The number of prisoners in British prisons is never less than 35,000. These essays show how such a clumsy instrument of social control came to be used, and why rehabilitation of offenders in prison has failed and is an unattainable goal. It points the way forward to a new penal system for a modern industrialized democracy in which incarceration will remain only for those too dangerous to be allowed their liberty. £4.50

A Social Atlas of London

John Shepherd, John Westaway and Trevor Lee

The maps in this atlas cover many aspects of London: its historical development, its transport networks, and the distribution of social classes, ethnic groups, housing, health, welfare, education services, and poverty. It will be helpful to all who are anxious to understand the social patterns of a metropolis at a time when town planning is under constant scrutiny and public participation in decision-making is encouraged. £4.95 paper covers £1.95

Prehistories

Peter Scupham

Peter Scupham's poems move through layers of experience to uncover the hidden, the apparently forgotten, discovering links between the buried self of a human personality and the buried records of Earth's geological and historic past. This first collection from Oxford shows him as a poet of sensitive intelligence with a rare delight in language. Paper covers £1.95

The Communist Parties of Western Europe

Neil McInnes

This book analyses where power lies in Western European communist parties. It assesses the size of the communist phenomenon, and analyses the social background of party members and voters, and the structure of the parties. The author views the future of communism in Europe as depending on the parties' adherence to ideas of 'the peaceful road to power', their relations with socialist parties, and their joint attempts to form an International free from Soviet influence. £5 *Royal Institute of International Affairs*

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